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Daily Report
East Europe

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Albania: Two Former Officials Arrested; Charges Explained

AU0803101796 Tirana RILINDJA DEMOKRATIKE in Albanian 7 Mar 96 p 3

[Report by Z. Ll.: "Two Former Senior Officials Arrested"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Denunciations by the interior minister and the chairman of the National Intelligence Service [ShIK] have led to the arrest of two former senior officials, former Minister of Public Order Vladimir Hysa and former ShIK Chairman Irakli Kocollari. As the Tirana procurator, Mr. Adnan Xhelili, explained, they are accused of giving orders for archive materials to be burned, thus threatening the interests of the state. It is thought that their motive was to destroy documents describing the crimes of the communist dictatorship.

Albania: Law on Verifying 'Character' of Officials

96P20314A Tirana FLETORJA ZYRTARE in Albanian Dec 95 No 26, pp 1139-1143

["Text" of Law No. 8043 of 30 November 1995 on "Verifying the Character of Officials and Other Persons Who Are Connected With the Protection of the Democratic State"]

[FBIS Translated Text] On the basis of Article 16 of Law No. 7491, of 29 April 1991, "On the Main Constitutional Provisions," in order to ensure the purity of the democratic life of the Albanian state in the period of the postcommunist transition, upon recommendation of the Council of Ministers, the People's Assembly of the Republic of Albania, has resolved:

Article 1—The organs and positions for which this law sets conditions for serving in are:

a) deputies in the People's Assembly of the Republic of Albania;

b) the President of the Republic, persons elected by Parliament and appointees of the President of the Republic;

c) members of the government, state secretaries and their deputies, directors general and directors of ministry directorates, and their equivalent in other state structures;

ch) in the Presidency, in the administration of the People's Assembly and the Council of Ministers, the ministries and other central institutions, the Constitutional Court, the Court of Cassation, the State Control Service, the Office of the Attorney General, and in lower-level positions than those mentioned in point "c," if it is thought, by the officials, that this is in the interest of the protection of the state and of its official information;

d) governors, vice governors and directors of the Bank of Albania;

dh) in the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania in the case of officers, that is, high ranking officers (generals and colonels) and commanders of independent units;

e) prefects, chairmen, and members of district councils, mayors of municipalities, chairmen of communes, and members of municipality and commune councils;

e umlaut) in the National Intelligence Service (SHIK), in the Military Intelligence Service (SHIU), and in the Public Order Intelligence Service (SHIR);

f) in the Republic Guard;

g) chiefs of the commissariat, chiefs of police, employees of the police department crime unit and other special branches;

gj) judges, associate judges, prosecutors, and officers in the criminal investigation department of the police;

h) in the diplomatic missions of the Republic of Albania;

i) in RTSH [Albanian Radiotelevision] and ATSH [Albanian Telegraph Agency—ATA] as directors and editors;

j) journalists and employees with high-level positions on newspapers with a circulation of more than 3,000 copies;

k) in management positions in economic units, in state financial and securities institutions, and in state banks;

l) rectors and directors of universities and secondary schools.

Article 2—In order to serve in the organs and positions listed in Article 1 of this law, the person, during the period from 28 November 1944 to 31 March 1991, must:

a) not have been a Politburo member or candidate member, a secretary or member of the Central Committee of the Albanian Worker's Party [PPSH], first secretary of a PPSH committee in the districts and analogous levels, an employee of the sector of State Security in the PPSH Central Committee, with the exception of cases in which the person worked against the official line or opposed it in a public manner;

b) not have been a member of the government, a member of the Presidential Council, chief justice of the Supreme Court, Attorney General, or a deputy before the 31 March 1991 elections, with the exception of cases in which the person worked against the official line or opposed it in a public manner;

c) not have worked as a Sigurimi [State Security Service] officer (legally or illegally), in its surveillance units and in the units which protected high officials;

ch) not have been listed in the Sigurimi records as a collaborator (informant, agent, resistor or accomodator) or he must not have knowingly collaborated with the Sigurimi (he must not have been the owner of an apartment placed at the disposal of the Sigurimi);

d) not have been a denouncer or a false or exaggerating witness in the political process to the disadvantage of the defendants;

dh) not have worked as an officer in the structure of camps and prisons for political prisoners;

e) not have graduated from the Higher School of the Ministry of Interior and its earlier counterparts in the profile of the Sigurimi or the three-month courses in this profile and their counterparts outside the country;

e umlaut) not have participated as an investigator, prosecutor, judge, or associate judge in special political trials;

f) he must not have been or must not be a collaborator of any foreign intelligence service or a similar service.

Article 3—In special cases, with the approval of the chairman of the Council of Ministers, the minister of defense, the minister of interior, and the chairman of the SHIK for its own workers, and for its own organ, the condition which is specified in letters "c," "ch," "dh," and "e" of Article 2 does not have to be met, if meeting this condition would be detrimental to important state interests, when the purpose of this law is not adversely affected.

Article 4—In order to verify the facts mentioned in Article 2, a state commission is established, with a chairman, a deputy chairman, and five members, honorable citizens and officials who are not deputies of the People's Assembly.

The chairman is appointed and removed by the People's Assembly. The deputy chairman and one member of the commission are appointed and removed by the Council of Ministers and the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Defense, and the National Intelligence Service will each appoint and remove one member.

Only those persons who have not been involved in the activities specified in Article 2 of this law can be members of this commission. The chairman of the Council of Ministers, the minister of Justice, and the chairman of the National Intelligence Service exercise joint control over the candidates for members of the commission.

Membership on the commission is nontransferable. The salary of the commission members is set by the Council of Ministers. A person is consulted before he is appointed as a member of the commission.

Article 5—The activity of the commission is legitimate when the chairman or the deputy chairman and at least four members are present. The proceedings of the commission are closed and decisions are made by majority vote.

Article 6—The commission can carry out investigations to prove the facts mentioned in Article 2 and summon for explanations interested parties, specialists, and persons who have connections with the matter.

If a person refuses to testify or gives false witness or evidence, he bears penal responsibility under the Penal Code.

Article 7—The commission begins the procedure when a request is made:

a) by the person who will be a candidate for election to one of the positions listed in Article 1;

b) by the work centers mentioned in Article 1;

c) by the person who will work in one of the positions or organs mentioned in Article 1 (Paragraphs b to l); the request is accompanied by the recommendation for the appointment;

ch) by an interested party, about whom accusations are made in the press or in public, or by relatives when the person is no longer alive, when a decision is needed to rehabilitate a person, compensate him for damages, or restore him in his position, or when he has held a position specified in Article 1 and is no longer a candidate for the position.

Article 8—The commission reaches a decision within 15 days of the receipt of the request. The decision provides arguments as to whether or not the person satisfies the requirements of this law in regard to the positions mentioned in Article 1.

When it is confirmed in the decision that the citizen is not one of those persons mentioned in Article 2, this fact should be reflected in all the documents.

Article 9—From now on, any person who becomes a candidate for election to any of the positions mentioned in Article 1 must receive, ahead of time, a decision from the commission stating that he has not held any of the positions listed in Article 2.

When he does not satisfy conditions for being a candidate in future elections and, nevertheless, presents his candidacy for registration, his electoral subject, public opinion and the Central Elections Commission are informed and the latter does not register him as a candidate.

When a person does not satisfy the necessary conditions for working in one of the positions mentioned in Article 1 (Paragraphs b to l), he is relieved of his job within 15 days of the date of the announcement of the decision by the state commission.

Persons who have been examined in accordance with this law and who have not been found to have held the positions specified in Article 2 are not monitored again when they serve once again in the positions specified in Article 1, as long as this law is in force.

Article 10—A person can appeal the state commission's decision at the Court of Cassation, within seven days of its communication and the court must hand down a decision within 15 days.

Article 11—It is prohibited to make public the facts presented in the commission's decision and the decision itself without the prior written approval of the person concerned, with the exception of the case mentioned in the first paragraph of Article 9.

Article 12—A request for verification of the leaderships of political associations and parties, which are present in the political and social life of the country, can be presented by the minister of justice or by the leaderships themselves which are informed of the results. The public is informed if these persons will continue to remain in these structures.

Article 13—The state commission, in carrying out the tasks assigned to it by this law, has the right to require that it be given access to all archives materials, including the documents of the Albanian Workers Party, from which it can get information on the Sigurimi and specific individuals, which deal with the implementation of this law.

The Ministry of Interior, the National Intelligence Service, the courts and the prosecutors, and the General Directorate of the Archives are obliged to present all the requested archives materials to the commission, immediately, upon request.

At its request, the commission should immediately be given access to all the duplicate copies of the above documents which deal with the activity of the Sigurimi, with its work program, or with the work of individual citizens.

Article 14—If the state commission or the organs charged with the protection of the constitutional system uncover, during their activity, information about the persons specified in Article 1, they inform the officials in the respective structures, who act in accordance with this law.

Article 15—The possession and the public use, outside the archives, of any document or facsimile of a document mentioned in Article 13 and the concealment, disappearance, falsification, and any other type of manipulation of documents of the Sigurimi and of other institutions with information which is the subject of this law, as well as false public accusations against individuals, constitute penal acts and are punished by five years in prison.

Article 16—In the absence of other legal provisions, it is prohibited to have contact with documentation which is the subject of this law for decisions regarding persons after the year 2001 and up to the year 2025. The National Intelligence Service, the Ministry of Interior, and the General Directorate of State Archives are charged with protecting the archives.

Article 17—The Council of Ministers is charged with drafting the necessary regulations for the implementation of this law.

Article 18—This law goes into effect on 30 November 1995 and is abrogated on 31 December 2001, with the exception of Articles 14 and 16.

Proclaimed by Decree No. 1311 of 4 December 1995 of the President of the Republic of Albania, Sali Berisha

Czech Republic: Commentary: Slovakia a Potential Danger

AU0703150396 Prague MLADA FRONTA DNES in Czech 2 Mar 96 p 12

[Commentary by Lubos Palata: "Slovakia Is Heading for the Gray Zone"]

[FBIS Translated Text] We should get prepared for the possibility that our eastern border may soon become the least stable and Slovakia the most risky among the Central European countries.

During the 29 February visit by Russian Foreign Minister Primakov, Meciar's government confirmed its intention to join NATO. This does not change anything, however, in the fact that Slovakia is, after Serbia and Bulgaria, the most pro-Moscow oriented state in the region and that it continues to reinforce its dependence on Russia.

Slovakia dropped out of the group of leading candidates for membership in the alliance and, through its own actions, will remain in no-man's-land for at least the next decade, and, with the progress of stabilization in Russia, the influence of Moscow could soon dominate over the Western influences. The non-European manner of government employed by Meciar and his movement certainly bring about difficulties in relations with the West. Thus, Meciar put himself in a position where the only metropolis that still welcomes him with open arms is Moscow.

If the Bratislava prime minister says, as he did during the Primakov visit, that he would like to lead the country into the European Union and NATO, he is not lying in principle. On the other hand, he practically rules out anything like that by the methods of his government.

Meciar certainly is not so naive as to expect any benefit for his country from the East. Nevertheless, he simply gives priority to his domestic political interests over the international status of Slovakia. He perceives the flirting with Russia as a convenient lever to use against the West, fearing the spread of influence of the Kremlin, to accept Slovakia into its structures even with its visible stains on the purity of its democracy. So far, however, the countries of the Union and the alliance have refused to play this game.

In comparison with Brussels's cold shoulder then, the Russian hug gains in warmth. This gives rise to an ever more realistic threat to Prague that we can have a neighbor on the other bank of the Morava River that will not be an ally.

Slovakia: U.S. Human Rights Report Detailed, Criticized

AU0703144096 Bratislava SLOVENSKA REPUBLIKA in Slovak 7 Mar 96 pp 1, 4

[Summary of U.S. report on observation of human rights in Slovakia by chief editor Jan Smolec: "The Trends of Deviation From Democracy in the Slovak Republic; Ladies and Gentlemen of Slovakia, Read What They Say About You in the United States!"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Washington (TASR correspondent Otakar Korinek)—While the (Slovak) government respects most of the human rights of its citizens in general, disturbing trends of deviation from democratic principles have emerged, the Report on Human Rights for 1995, which the U.S. Department of State released yesterday, states about the Slovak Republic. It states further that credible accusations exist of politically motivated dismissals of state administration officials, the endangerment of opponents of government policy, the abuse of police power, and intervention in the electronic media.

Discrimination and violence against women are serious problems. Romanies face social discrimination, and the police do not provide them with sufficient protection against constant attacks by skinheads.

Slovakia recorded uneven progress toward the market-oriented economy. There was a pronounced economic growth, but the government was not willing to give up its control over certain sectors—e.g., agriculture, transportation, power generation, and telecommunications. Privatization, which is fast progressing, lacks transparency, and to a large extent excludes foreign investors. The National Bank of Slovakia continued to cooperate with the government in a disciplined financial policy.

In several places, the report mentions the kidnapping of the son of President Michal Kovac. It says that during the abduction Kovac, Jr., was tortured, and that SIS [Slovak Intelligence Service] agents were involved. It records the police search of the official rooms of Bishop Rudolf Balaz after the Bishops' Conference expressed its support for President Michal Kovac.

The Slovak Government respects the freedom of expression and the freedom of press in general. The press media are free and uncensored. A total of 27 private radio stations and one private television station hold broadcast licenses, four private companies and one local administration received regional broadcast licenses, and one company broadcasts statewide via satellite. In addition, there are 73 cable television license holders.

Nevertheless, politicizing the state-owned broadcast media remains an obvious problem, the report emphasizes. Opposition views are seldom heard here, and in April the television refused to broadcast the president's address. Moreover, the STV [Slovak Television] director refused to broadcast three highly popular satirical programs oriented against members of the new government. This was followed by a signature collection and mass public demonstrations. The government did not intervene, but the television did not report on these demonstrations. The broadcast license of Radio Free Europe was extended by one year only instead of the applied-for three years, and under the condition that the anti-Slovak bias of the editorial office will "improve," the report of the U.S. Department of State reads further.

The verification of signatures on the Democratic Union petition sheets, the abduction of the president's son, the mugging of an opposition politician and journalist who "investigated" the abduction of the president's son, and the extensive dismissals of state administration staff have contributed to the intimidating atmosphere.

Numerous operations served to reinforce government power in such a manner that concerns have emerged for the future fate of plurality, power distribution, and democratic development in general.

Numerous human rights groups operate in the Slovak Republic without any limitation imposed by the government. The chairman of the Slovak National Party filed a request with the Office of the Prosecutor, however, that the extragovernment organization financed by George Soros be investigated, after this international philanthropist criticized the Slovak Government.

In the sphere of minorities, the report observes, the government continues to finance their activities, but at a significantly lower level. The representatives of the ethnic Hungarians complained about these cuts. What is more important, however, is that they criticized alternative education, the purpose of which is, according to them, to assimilate ethnic Hungarians. Moreover, they expressed great concerns regarding the state language law. The OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe] high commissioner for minorities also expressed concerns about this law, and declared that he will assess it only after the promised law on the minority languages is adopted.

Despite protests from the Jewish community, celebrations of Jozef Tiso took place, with the education minister taking part. Moreover, vandalism occurred at the Jewish cemetery in Stupava. Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar awarded a journalistic price to a weekly that published anti-Semitic caricatures of George Soros because of his Jewish origin.

A serious and ever more pressing problem, according to the report, is the violence of skinheads against Romanies. It took the government 10 days before it issued a statement condemning racial intolerance after a Romany was immolated. Other members of visible minorities have also experienced occasional attacks. A Sierra Leone citizen was beaten in a Bratislava tavern. Skinheads assaulted an Asian student and an African tourist.

Violence against women, especially sexual violence, also is a serious problem. The report states that according to experts, 47,000 instances of violence against or intolerance to women (physical, emotional, or sexual) occurred in Slovakia in 1993. Almost half of the reported instances was physical and sexual violence.

The report observes that the government respects the right of assembly, association, and religion. No political prisoners have been reported in Slovakia in 1995, and no political killings took place. Freedom of movement and travel is guaranteed, and refugees are treated according to international norms. Trade unions also worked freely.

The Chief Editor's View

Dear readers,

I have just finished reading a proof of a newspaper page on which U.S. Commerce Secretary Ron Brown speaks about Slovakia in a very favorable manner. At that very moment, the Foreign Department duty editor, all dejected, brought the U.S. Department of State report on violation of human rights in Slovakia, which you have just read. In response to the question of what to do with it, I ordered—publish it! Let Slovakia know what the U.S. Department of State thinks of our country. True, it is sad that the U.S. Department of State experts apparently took a substantial part of their information from a single opposition, very biased, and lying Slovak daily. At the same time, dear readers, I would like to appeal to you not to let this view of Slovakia upset you. There are politicians in the United States who do not base their opinion solely on the opposition sources. They are also willing to listen to the politicians, who represent most the majority of voters. Ron Brown is one of them. [passage omitted]

Slovakia: Czech Foreign Minister on Visit to Bratislava

LD0803113596 Bratislava Rozhlasova Stanica Slovensko Network in Slovak 0900 GMT 8 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Czech Foreign Affairs Minister Josef Zieleniec is paying an official visit to Bratislava today. At the moment he is meeting Ivan Gasparovic, parliament speaker. Later on Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar will received him.

In the afternoon Josef Zieleniec will have talks with [Slovak] Foreign Minister Juraj Schenk. It is expected that they will sign an interstate agreement in the sphere of state supervision over the safety of nuclear equipment.

In conclusion of his visit Czech Foreign Minister Josef Zieleniec will be received by President Michal Kovac.

Slovakia: Kovac Interviewed After 3 Years in Office

LD0703231396 Bratislava VTV Television in Slovak 1830 GMT 7 Mar 96

[Interview with Slovak President Michal Kovac by Anna Vargova on 7 March; place not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Vargova] The end of last week marked three years since Michal Kovac was elected president of the republic. To mark the occasion, the president granted us an interview today. We were interested to learn, among other things, his view on a possible solution to the tense situation between himself, the government, the prime minister, and parliament, bearing in mind that the government coalition does not have the 90 votes needed to dismiss him and he is not going to resign.

[Kovac] It is becoming clear that we have to get used to the fact that even in future there may be certain healthy tensions between the president, the government, and parliament, or between the opposition and the coalition within parliament. We should stop thinking that if the president, the prime minister, and the parliament speaker hold different views that they are enemies or that their differing views must give rise to tension.

On the contrary, such a situation presents a challenge and it calls for a more intensive dialogue in order to look for solutions that would meet ideas of several parliamentary and political institutions and entities.

[Vargova] The government coalition very frequently blames you for giving your partners at various talks abroad very detailed information on our domestic problems and, in doing so, for damaging Slovakia's good name, particularly through your statements.

With hindsight, which of your statements made at such meetings would you now choose not to make or, perhaps, make somewhat differently?

[Kovac] I am sorry to see that there are critical views concerning the work of the government coalition or concerning several steps that are considered as a departure from democracy as they are nonstandard steps and prompt doubts.

I have personally always tried to explain the causes of these phenomena, to point out that they are temporary, and to ask that no negative conclusions are made against Slovakia on their basis. In my view, I have managed to moderate in many ways the negative impact and the negative activity of the government coalition in the sphere of domestic policy.

[Vargova] You monitor the activity on our political scene very carefully. How do you, as the president of this country, assess some of the steps taken by parliament or the government? For example, what do you think of efforts to adopt an amendment to the Penal Code, which is to act as a substitute for the law on the protection of the republic, especially bearing in mind how foreign countries are going to judge us and what the reaction of the domestic political scene and of our citizens is going to be like?

[Kovac] In this particular instance, I do not believe that our main problem is the Law on the Protection of the Republic. Moreover, we are not yet familiar with the particular content of the amendment to the relevant articles of the Penal Code.

However, as the president of the republic I can clearly say that there are concerns about the possibility of power abuse rather than concerns about possible subversive activity against the republic or the idea of a Slovak [statnost] state.

Slovakia: Continuing Isolation of Lexa's SIS Viewed

AU0803094796 Bratislava SME in Slovak 6 Mar 96 p 4

[Commentary by Peter Toth: "Realizing an Eastern Doctrine"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Slovak Information Service's [SIS] partnership relations with foreign secret services, with the exception of Russian intelligence, are nonexistent. This is damaging to Slovakia's interests, because, since I. Lexa took up the post of SIS director, cooperation with Western secret services in the campaign against terrorism has been broken off and an unequivocal inclination toward the Russian secret service has set in. It is worth pointing out that the SIS (already under the I. Lexa era) was invited to last year's meeting of the secret services of the Visegrad Four countries. The meeting was held before the kidnapping of M. Kovac, Jr. The SIS is not invited to this year's meeting of the intelligence services, which will be held in Slovenia, partly because I. Lexa is, in the language of the ruling coalition, persona non grata in this fraternity.

The SIS's reputation in the world has not only been tarnished by the scandal surrounding M. Kovac, Jr.'s kidnapping. For example, the war between the SIS and the police, which I. Lexa unleashed by submitting complaints against police officers, has also contributed to this. Later, the direct planting of SIS officers in the police force and the, so to speak, mass enticement of Police Corps officers into the secret service by offers of high salaries also added to this. Most recently, there is the case of Frantisek S., who joined the SIS surveillance department where he is being trained by Gejza V., a graduate of several KGB courses, to set up and head a surveillance team in Banska Bystrica. Other staff from the Interior Ministry's Inspection Service Office should join the surveillance team after him, which does not please the Interior Ministry's senior functionaries. Tension between the police and the SIS is also increasing following incidents caused by the irresponsible behavior of intelligence officers. For example, in the fall of 1995, a police patrol disturbed men who were exchanging the license plates of a red Favorit and a blue Mitsubishi Pajero near the Kosice crematorium. Later, it became apparent that these were members of a SIS surveillance team whose vigilance had been reduced under the influence of alcohol.

This is also a means of realizing V. Meciar's idea: "If they do not want us in the West, we will turn to the East."

Hungary: Horn Views Domestic, Foreign Issues

AU0703124996 Budapest MAGYAR HIRLAP in Hungarian 2 Mar 96 p 8

[Interview with Prime Minister Gyula Horn by Dezso Pinter; place and date not given: "The Finance Minister Is a Team Man"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Order in the Hungarian Socialist Party [MSZP] now means that the parliamentary group and the government are receiving support from congress to continue on the existing path, and to answer the question of how it is possible to reduce the major social tensions, Prime Minister Gyula Horn told MAGYAR HIRLAP. "Neither in the past 20 months nor in the past six years have I lived through any period when I could have said that things are going so well that I could quit. However, this day will at some point come," Horn said. He also stated: "I have received many blows from the former government parties and current opposition, the coalition partner, and fellow party members in the past six years, but I am not broken." Horn sees the new finance minister as a politician who strives for agreement but does not doubt the government's basic direction. Horn also trusts that having chosen Peter Medgyessy will not cause a break in Privatization Minister Tamas Suchman's position.

[Pinter] In Hungary and abroad, many people have welcomed your choice of Medgyessy as successor to the resigned finance minister. However, some people have reproached you or have been sorry that you decided in favor of a known person from the times of the party state—a former minister colleague. What does this approach show to you?

[Horn] It shows me that facts, after all, have a bigger role than commentaries. The fact is that I talked to eight nominees. Some were alarmed by the size of the task, and did not accept the office for this reason. They also saw the nomination as an honor, just as did those people who would have accepted the office, but whom I had to reject for one reason or another. The process of seeking a finance minister confirmed for me that professionally significant forces support the government in the implementation of its goals. I do not know of any active politician who does not have a past. Medgyessy has no reason to be ashamed of his past. Medgyessy has a very good knowledge of the way the market economy functions. At the time, he took a key role in working out and introducing a Western-style taxation system. In the former state party, in his functions as finance minister and deputy prime minister, he was one of the reformers, and had constant tough debates with the orthodox people. Now he has been termed as a team man who is ready to have meaningful talks with his fellow ministers and with representatives of the interest representation groups and professions. A person who strives for agreement but does not question the government's basic direction.

[Pinter] This is precisely it. According to some views, it will be possible to measure the new finance minister's success by the extent to which he opposes you, in other words, to what extent he will be willing to enter into the absolutely necessary arguments with you.

[Horn] You are already now coming up with this?

[Pinter] This was only a quoted opinion.

[Horn] From my party?

[Pinter] Correct.

[Horn] I am glad that I can be correct in something at last. I again have to refer to the facts. I am the prime minister of a government that has in the past year introduced tough restrictive and reform measures. I accepted that three of my ministers left because of this, and I accepted that my political popularity plummeted because of this. I took on the flood of abuses and curses, and many other things. Rather than for the sake of international partners and financial institutions, this was mainly because I became convinced that this was the only road that could take the country out of the crisis. My government stopped the wait-and-see policy, and made a commitment to do what the previous two to three governments had not done. We said that any further increase of the foreign and domestic debt stock was unacceptable, because it is perilous from the viewpoint of the country catching up. We said that the rights that had been cemented in concrete for decades were no longer tenable if they were not supported by economic performance. As for the debates, I have to commit myself to stabilization and the reform of state administration, and I also have to think of society's receptivity.

[Pinter] Is this not an obligation also for a finance minister?

[Horn] Naturally it is his obligation, but he has many pressures from his own apparatus and from various circles. The interest conflicts are very high in our country. Whatever we touch, we violate the interests of groups. However, the government has to think in terms of the nation and adjust its measures to this. It is me who has to take responsibility for these measures in the first place. It is obvious that I cannot constantly be made to face already existing situations.

[Pinter] Were you often made to face such situations during Lajos Borkos's office as finance minister?

[Horn] Sometimes I had to make great efforts to prevent such situations.

[Pinter] The implementation of the reform of state administration holds out the prospect of further heavy afflictions—not situations, but relatively long-lasting conditions. Have you prepared yourself for this mentally?

[Horn] Yes, I have.

[Pinter] Is it possible that those people are right who claim that, as an experienced magician, you always keep two balls in the air? You either mention society's tolerance, or the inevitability of reforms, and thus create an unjustifiably large personal room for yourself within which to maneuver?

[Horn] One cannot perform magic either with society's tolerance or with the reforms. Our forced measures have put hundreds of thousands of people into an impossible situation. Masses of people exist in Hungary who cannot even cover their basic daily needs. Is it political demagoguery if, listening to his political honesty and human feelings, someone tries to find solutions? I did not swear that I would turn my back on people who are living in misery. The reforms are guaranteed to be implemented even if we increase the drug prices at a slower speed. Yes, there is a limit! OK, if you like, we can call this a ball kept in the air. But let us also see the other one: If the government rigidly insisted on prior solutions with no financial backing, then it would first of all be committing an irredeemable crime against the country. We will not do this. Actually, rather than mere restriction, the goal of the reform of state administration is to establish a modern operation of the major systems, namely health, education, pensions, and local governments.

[Pinter] Did anyone in any way try to influence you from abroad when you were looking for a new finance minister?

[Horn] No one tried to influence me, but I received a large amount of advice from leaders of international financial institutions and politicians of some countries. I also sensed some concern and fear, in case we want to abandon the policy of the past year. However, the choice seemed reassuring.

[Pinter] Many people appear to believe that Suchman was your main candidate. Is this true?

[Horn] He was one of the candidates, not the main one.

[Pinter] You asked Socialist ministers and deputies if they would accept Suchman as finance minister. Many of them are said to have said yes. Then Medgyessy was the only one left standing. Could the Socialists who spoke up and were mobilized in Suchman's interest give unpleasant surprises to you—or to the coalition—in the near future?

[Horn] With two abstentions, the parliamentary group—including Suchman's friends and those who recognize his work—uniformly supported Medgyessy's nomination. I am certain that they did not vote yes out of hypocrisy. Suchman still has very serious tasks as privatization minister. He is a young man who, in my view, has a great future in the MSZP. I trust that the fact that Medgyessy was chosen will not cause a break in Suchman's attitude. I also trust that his relationship with the new finance minister will be much better than with the previous one.

[Pinter] According to information from various sources, Hungary is at the gates of the OECD. Has Bokros's resignation changed this position in any way?

[Horn] According to the indications, it has not changed it at all. Parliament will soon pass the still missing decisions that are necessary for OECD membership—adequate handling of bank secrets, and guaranteeing a balanced management of social insurance. From now on, no political, economic policy, or moral basis exists for questioning our membership in the OECD.

[Pinter] How far have talks with the IMF gone?

[Horn] I also ensured the IMF's leadership that we would meet our obligations. A decision can be expected on accepting the agreement in the middle of March.

[Pinter] How is foreign capital reacting to the processes in Hungary?

[Horn] In a reassuring way for us, and I must say that this was the same during the time the south Slav war was raging in our neighborhood. Even at this time, a larger amount of foreign working capital came into Hungary than into any other East Central European country. The country's privatization success in 1995 gave much encouragement to foreign capital: We reached double the planned income and became the regional leader in the privatization of strategic branches. The decisive phase of privatization will be completed by the end of 1996, and the dominance of private property will become typical. Foreign capital increasingly takes it into account that trained and—I say this with mixed feelings—relatively cheap labor is available in Hungary. It is to our advantage that we are increasingly playing a bridging role between the East and West and the North and South. Those who come to us can also get to other places.

[Pinter] Do we completely have to give up a closer cooperation of the Visegrad four, namely Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia?

[Horn] Hungary constantly urges tighter contacts in developing free trade, removing customs, supporting investments, and mutual participation in privatization. I consider it important that the crisis, which was sparked off by the extremists in connection with the Oleksy case in Poland, has been settled. We have good relations with the Polish Government, with President Kwasniewski. Unlike Hungary, the Czech Republic has been able to ensure the continuity of politics for almost six years. The Czech Government implemented a rather soft changeover, Prague did not drastically apply the bankruptcy law, and privatization did not mean the closure of masses of companies or market purchases. The Czech Republic chose a different road in many ways—we will soon find out with what success. We have good economic relations with Slovakia, but sharp tensions exist sometimes because of the Bratislava government's attitude to the Hungarian minority. The same can be said about our relations with Romania. At the same time, several hundred Hungarian-Romanian joint ventures have been set up in the past two years, and Romanian investments of Hungarian companies have also become significant.

[Pinter] What developments do you expect in the issue of the Hungarian-Romanian basic treaty?

[Horn] At the Madrid summit in mid-December, we agreed with President Iliescu that we would try to agree by the end of March. This is when the European Union's intergovernmental conference will hold its opening session in Turin. Of course, we have to take it into account that Romania is in the middle of the election campaign, and this does not necessarily help the cause of the basic treaty.

[Pinter] What is your opinion on the mainly opposition view that Hungary has, to a certain extent, been left on its own with its struggles in the international arena?

[Horn] These opinions are unfounded. If a country wants to be left on its ow,n then it will definitely be destroyed in a world that functions under the notion of mutual dependencies and the need to rely on each other. During my 18 months as prime minister, I have visited virtually all countries of the European Union, and all of my negotiating partners expressed their appreciation for our efforts, results, and especially our neighborhood policy. The leadership of the United States expresses its support in deeds as well as in words. We have never before been linked so closely to the euro-atlantic organizations of integration and the states as in the past two years, and we have also managed to improve our eastern and even our more distant positions.

[Pinter] Is Germany's role changing in Hungary's international relations?

[Horn] Germany is a partner of special importance for us, and will hopefully remain so. I am happy to be able to say that all of our important goals are supported by German politics and, what is very important for us, by German society. At the same time, Germany—together with other western countries—should rethink many things in connection with Hungary and the whole east-central European region. It is by no accident that we are trying to show that our admission to the euro-atlantic organizations is not at all only in our interest, it is also in the West's interest. Meeting the requirements of the European Union does not only depend on us. We need considerate support, which will certainly have its returns and, together with this, a new way of thinking. Naturally, it would be good to receive some slices from the common financial funds, but the facts in this respect are not very encouraging for us. What could achieve results more quickly is Hungary's willingness to participate in European enterprises, for example, in constructing the trans-European infrastructure. The Hungarian Government set up an integration cabinet in February, which is to promote euro-atlantic integration. Professional preparation is the most important task of the strategic working group operating alongside this.

[Pinter] Russia continues to oppose Hungary's NATO membership, and also often voices its doubts in connection with Hungary's EU membership. Some people are worried that the West will abandon Hungary's support because of this, and Hungary will come under an influence that it does not desire. Can you see such a danger?

[Horn] No. If the West abandoned support for Hungary, then through this it would also express that it does not recognize the various peoples' and nations' right to self-determination. It is our decision whether or not to belong to an organization of integration. Neither Moscow nor any other place can make a decision on whether we should join. At the same time, I also believe that, rather than conducting a campaign for NATO membership, we should conduct a sensible and continuous dialogue. This is what we recommended to our Russian partners. I can understand all countries that worry about their security. Naturally, I also understand Russia. However, I am convinced that, in this shaky world, NATO strengthens the security of all. I hope that, after the presidential election campaign in Russia, it will be possible to start the desired dialogue. This is also important because the issues of European security and cooperation cannot be handled without Russia. This superpower has to be given a suitable role. All responsible political forces have to understand this, in Hungary, too.

[Pinter] According to the opinion of a number of opposition members, the parliamentary forces' former unity on the country's foreign policy has been broken. What are your views on this?

[Horn] Certain politicians want to sacrifice this unity in their own interest. This will not work. Actually, I do not believe that any of the responsible opposition forces do not support the goal that Hungary should join the euro-atlantic organizations of integration. I am not happy about the crises and confusion among the parliamentary opposition, because in uncertain periods in a party's life its politicians may become radicalized. The country and the parliament do not need extremist ambitions. The time of revolutions is over. A strict process of transformation has to be carried out, and this cannot succeed without society's support. It increases the public's disappointment with politics if the representatives of politics argue with each other in an unacceptable style. As a left-wing man, I am interested in having a European-style right wing sitting opposite us. I would like the very practical, I could say down-to-earth, viewpoints, rather than ideological conflicts to play a role in the relationship of the opposition and the government coalition. For example, with respect to the everyday tasks, how can Hungary catch up with the community of the developed states? In this sense, there is no order in the opposition parties.

[Pinter] And will your party have order before the congress session due at the end of March?

[Horn] Fortunately, the MSZP does not—and will not—have the kind of order comparable to the former state party. Everyone uses his right to express his opinion or protest in public. The MSZP now has order if the parliamentary group and the government receive support from congress to continue the road we are following, and to find an answer as to how it might be possible to reduce the major social and welfare tensions. In order for the leadership to be able to perform its tasks more decisively, it has to be refreshed, and it needs some replacements.

[Pinter] But you are the only candidate for party chairman. Does this mean enough security for your party?

[Horn] Should I now make excuses? Since my election to party chairman, namely since May 1990, I have had the audacity to achieve some results. I might have had some role in the 1994 election victory, in the party becoming a member of Socialist International, and in its now having functioning bodies and organizations. The fact that there is no countercandidate is probably a sign of appreciation for this work. However, it is true that we are behind in raising successors. You can believe me in that I have not dissuaded anyone from becoming a candidate for party chairman.

[Pinter] Can you see a person to whom you could safely hand over the chairman's position?

[Horn] I can see a few people like that. The MSZP does not have irreplaceable people. I am interested in performance, rather than in power—whether I can reach the results people expect of me.

[Pinter] Will you reach them?

[Horn] Partly. Perhaps.

[Pinter] It has been proved many times that you are an excellent tactician. You often say that you are not interested in power, but at the same time, it comes to light that you direct people's movements around your person in a precalculated way, and the affected people only notice this when they are already out. It is always you who somehow comes out victorious from the debates. What are your views on this opinion?

[Horn] As I have mentioned, I am performance and result oriented, and this is the only area where I am rock solid. If I undertake to do something then I want to achieve it by all means, even if some or many people do not like this. In the past six years, I have received an awful lot of blows from the former governing parties and the current opposition, the coalition partners, and from fellow party members, but I have not been broken. After a while, one becomes a prisoner to the role one accepted. In 1994 I undertook that, heading a party and a coalition, I would help to put the country's affairs in order. I cannot do what some of my fellow combatants have done, namely I do not toss in the towel during a round. Neither during the past 20 months, nor in the past six years, have I lived through a period when I could have said that things are going so well now that I could quit. However, this day will also come.

Hungary: U.S. Army Use of U.S. Suppliers Discussed

AU0703205796 Budapest NEPSZAVA in Hungarian 7 Mar 96 p 7

[Commentary by Attila Lenart: "American Kitchen"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Americans in Taszar are employing a new cook. Or rather, some cooks are the same but the contract of the Korona Rt. [Inc.], which has been doing the catering, has not been renewed. In a letter the Americans earlier expressed thanks for the company's devoted work, that the company had renewed its kitchens for many tens of millions of forints (according to the Korona, for 120 million) within a few weeks and organized the catering for 10,000 people.

The Korona catered for the soldiers from December, when the Americans arrived, but the contract was only made in January. This contract was not renewed from 1 March. It had not been indicated to the company that it should be looking for a new customer. Afterwards, the decision was justified by saying that they had not been satisfied with the work of the Korona Rt.'s employees, and it had been published in the press that the kitchen employees had been stealing. To our knowledge, the Brown and Root company which organizes the services for the Americans has never claimed this, but has not denied it either.

The Brown and Root made a contract with International American Product, a U.S. company, and it certainly had the right to do this. This company started to employ mostly the same people whom the Korona had employed before—in other words, the same people with whose work they had supposedly been dissatisfied and who were said to have been stealing.

All this might be a bit ironic, but very logical. The fact that the Americans are better off contracting a U.S. company and giving the money to their compatriots than paying for the services of Hungarian entrepreneurs is obviously in the background of the decision. The Hungarian interpreter company which had initially worked for them was similarly replaced by an American company. In this case, a contract was not even ended, the university students who had come to the area expecting a good wage were simply not given any more work.

It must be customary for the U.S. Army to contract U.S. companies for whatever they can. For the Houston center of Brown and Root, many thousands of kilometers away from here, this is a customary and understandable procedure. However, in Hungary, where U.S. soldiers had never been stationed before, and where the public and the media are watching their every move with eager eyes, the replacement of the cooks can have political overtones. With the cancellation of every contract with Hungarian entrepreneurs, the hope is fading that the presence of the U.S. soldiers can yield some profit for the region. All this probably makes little difference on the other side of the Atlantic, where we had received promises that they would purchase everything locally if they can get them in adequate quality and at the right price from Hungarian entrepreneurs.

Hungary: HSP on Autonomy for Vojvodina Hungarians

LD0703224796 Budapest MTV Television Network in Hungarian 1830 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Hungarian Government and the Hungarian Socialist Party [HSP] will represent the Vojvodina Hungarians' endeavors for regional autonomy at international forums, Imre Szekeres, leader of the HSP's parliamentary deputies' group, said after his talks with leaders of the Association of Vojvodina Hungarians [UVM].

Imre Szekeres rated the UVM's regional autonomy concept as realistic and the HSP will propose that the predicament of the Vojvodina Hungarians be discussed at international forums, too.

[Begin Szekeres recording] In connection with settling issues regarding the former Yugoslavia, participants in international political life should deal with the fate of the Hungarian minority in Vojvodina in the same way as they have been dealing with Kosovo. [end recording]

According to UVM Chairman Jozsef Kasza, it is too early to demand political autonomy. However, the establishment of Hungarian self-governments must not be delayed further.

[Begin Kasza recording] We ask for self-determination in areas where the Vojvodina Hungarians are in a majority, for the establishment of a Hungarian autonomous region which would fit into the Serbian legal system in a natural way. [end recording]

Jozsef Kasza pointed out that in order to ensure the survival of the Vojvodina Hungarians, whose numbers have been reduced by nearly 200,000 people, and the Hungarian nature of the school system and education must be preserved, instead of the assertion of exclusive Serbian interests.

Hungary: Proposal on Restoring Borders Assessed

AU0703201196 Budapest NEPSZABADSAG in Hungarian 7 Mar 96 p 3

[Editorial by Attila Seres: "We Have Our Own Funar"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Even with its ups and downs, the foreign policy consensus has been a rare quality of the two consecutive legislative cycles since the free elections held in 1990. Even if some poisoned arrow is occasionally sent by the opposition parties, it only aims at certain measures and not at our system of foreign policy priorities as a whole. Similarly to all the countries in this region, Hungarian diplomacy is driving on a one-way street full of signs that ban halting and switching.

So far, every party and political figure in possession of a license to engage in parliamentary politics has observed this rule.

This is why the recent proposal in Parliament caused consternation, and even abhorrence among the more sensitive spirits, a proposal that the Hungarian Government should initiate negotiations for the "peaceful reannexation" of territories lost at the setting of Trianon borders. Consternation is justified even if the Smallholders' Party [FKGP] deputy in Parliament, Sandor Kavassy, would like to restore the pre-Trianon borders peacefully and friendly, in the spirit of mutual understanding. Sandor Kavassy submitted his proposal with an innocent (or simulated?) naivity, as if he did not realize that no country in this region is ready to relinquish one grain of land voluntarily and happily. Take the example of the war in Yugoslavia. They could only redraw the borders in the territory of former Yugoslavia by shedding the blood of a quarter of a million people, and nobody is basking now in the winner's pose. It will take decades to restore the destroyed economy and who knows how much time is needed to restore, say, the Serbs' prestige and trustworthiness in international politics.

Hungary would risk no more and probably no less than that if it supported Kavassy's proposal. And this will obviously not take place. Most probably, the Hungarian Parliament will reject this proposal with a great majority, a proposal that some deputies already referred to as a monstrosity. And Mr Kavassy knew this well when he submitted his motion. What was his aim after all? Provocation, or the isolation of the Hungarian diplomacy that has been collecting good marks lately? Is it possible that the smallholders are preparing for the often-mentioned upcoming change in power by voicing revisionist and irredentist slogans?

Kavassy himself or his party should answer these questions. For now, we should be satisfied with the fact that, from now on, we also have our own Funar. [Reference to the extremist nationalist mayor of Cluj in Romania] And we will have to keep explaining him and dissociating ourselves from him.

Hungary: New Party Outlines Political Aims

LD0703210496 Budapest Duna TV in Hungarian 1700 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] We formed the Hungarian Democratic People's Party [MDNP] in order to convince society that there is still a chance for improvement, but we do not want this to be the privilege of only a few thousand people. This is part of the political statement of the party formed yesterday.

The members of the MDNP's parliamentary deputies group introduced themselves at a news briefing today. Yesterday, 16 people signaled their intention to move from the Hungarian Democratic Forum [MDF] to the new party. This morning, however, Gyorgy Csoti decided to stay in the Forum after all. The new faction, comprising 15 people, has just reached the mark—this is the minimum number a parliamentary group has to comprise according to the house rules.

Attila Zsigmond outlined the party's political statement according to which the political aims are to complete the social market economy which is based on competition but looks after the weak and needy, and to create real democracy. Their main endeavor is to help create a center-right coalition which is capable of government.

Hungary: More MDF Members Choose Between Parties

LD0703142296 Budapest Kossuth Radio Network in Hungarian 1300 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Lajos Fur, who recently resigned as chairman of the Hungarian Democratic Forum [MDF], decided to leave the MDF parliamentary group and to carry on as an independent deputy.

The opposition politician explained his decision with the unprecedented and unacceptable events which happened at the party's national conference and which surmounted all the previous disruption, petty and blind destruction.

Five other MDF deputies—so far undecided regarding the parliamentary group's split—also spoke at the same press briefing. Zoltan Bogardi, Gyula Kis, Laszlo Medgyasszay, Peter Nahimi, and Jeno Poda decided to stay in the MDF as long as the party's aim remains the establishment of a civic Hungary and a firm, honest, and high quality representation of the interests of the entire Hungarian nation.

Hungary: No Major Differences Between MDF, MDNP

AU0703201996 Budapest MAGYAR HIRLAP in Hungarian 7 Mar 96 p 5

[Article by Ildiko Csuhaj: "Similarities and Differences in the Policy of the MDF and the MDNP"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Several people accused Ivan Szabo's followers coming out of the 10th National Meeting of the Hungarian Democratic Forum [MDF] of wanting to establish a new party and a new faction because they were forced out of power. With this conclusion, many people questioned whether there is any political difference between Sandor Lezsak's group and Ivan Szabo's group.

At the 10th National Meeting, both MDF Chairman Sandor Lezsak and Ivan Szabo made it clear in connection with their alliance policy that they cannot envisage any party alliance with the parties of the current government coalition, namely the Alliance of Free Democrats [SZDSZ] and the Hungarian Socialist Party [MSZP]. They both said that they are engaged in politics against the coalition, and not against each other. Neither the MDF nor Ivan Szabo's new Hungarian Democratic People's Party [MDNP] envisage any interparty contacts or alliance with Jozsef Torgyan's Independent Smallholders' Party [FKGP]. They can only envisage cooperation in local government bodies and in Parliament. The MDF regards the Christian Democratic People's Party [KDNP] as its first ally, but the MDF wants to cooperate with a firm Federation of Young Democrats [FIDESZ], too. Outlining its system of alliances, the MDNP preferred the FIDESZ first of all, but the MDNP would also closely cooperate with KDNP politicians who represent the euro-atlantic line. As for the parties outside Parliament, the MDF does not urge interparty relations with Istvan Csurka's Hungarian Justice and Life Party [MIEP], but the MDF wants to continue cooperation with the MIEP in the local government bodies. However, the MDNP cannot envisage any kind of cooperation with the MIEP.

Regarding its relations to the Antall heritage, the MDF program states that the party represents the late prime minister's program. At the same time, in addition to the classic three trends—Christian democracy, the populist-national trend, and the national liberal trend—the MDF also represents the national plebeian trend. The MDNP regards the three trends as the essence of the Antall heritage and wants to represent this. According to the MDF, the two parties cannot cooperate the way the German CDU [Christian Democratic Union] and CSU [Christian Social Union] do; however, the MDNP sees the CDU-CSU relations as a possible pattern for cooperation.

In their programs, both parties set out the goal of creating a social market economy. At the same time, in its economic policy, the MDNP clearly regards the liberal economic school as acceptable. In their foreign policy, both the MDF and the MDNP set the goal of belonging to the euro-atlantic integration. Regarding the issue of ethnic Hungarians living beyond our borders, the MDNP would like to guarantee the rights of ethnic Hungarians beyond our borders primarily with the help of the European political organizations. The MDF wants to firmly represent the ethnic Hungarians at the level of international organizations on one hand; in addition, the MDF regards bilateral contacts and a good-neighborly policy as necessary. The MDF also urges the creation of close party relations with the communities of ethnic Hungarians living beyond our borders to facilitate the flow of information.

Those who continue to stay in the MDF and those who founded the new party both think that there are differences of ideology and political mentality between the two parties. Many people think, however, that there are not considerable differences between the two parties' political concepts.

Hungary: MSZP Deputy Examines Budget Conflict

AU0703195596 Budapest UJ MAGYARORSZAG in Hungarian 7 Mar 96 pp 1, 5

[Interview with Mrs. Istvan Szollosi, chairperson of the Teachers Union, by Attila Laszlo Bertok; place and date not given: "The MSZP Has Many Bolsheviks, Szollosi Says"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Peter Medgyessy, the new finance minister, has stressed that there will not be a change of emphasis in his financial policy: He will continue to place the emphasis on putting the social insurance and education sphere in order (meaning restrictions). However, the larger government party [Hungarian Socialist Party, MSZP] has many politicians who do not identify with the attitude that the budget deficit has to be made up from money taken away from education. One of these is Mrs. Istvan Szollosi, chairperson of the Teachers Union, who, many people say, criticizes the government from the left. We interviewed Szollosi on how she sees the functioning of her party and the government.

[Szollosi] At the time, at around 1989, Kata Beke, Gyorgy Janosi, and I toured the country. We were a typical team, and I had the chance to learn about the roots of the education program, which ran under Janosi's name, but was jointly created. Beke also tried to represent this in the previous cycle and I also identify with it. It was a real education-oriented program, rather than one controlled by restrictive politics which we still saw as something very distant at the time. Its goals were equality of opportunity, welfare care, differentiated financing for regions that were behind, the establishment of norms on a welfare basis, student groups in the smallest possible units, foreign language education and, most important, all these laid down in a law. We said that the state has to provide the resources for ensuring the constitutional right to basic training. Then came the Alliance of Free Democrats' [SZDSZ] program which said that a competitive situation has to be created between the schools. Nothing is mentioned in it about the areas that are falling behind. While we are saying that the state has to guarantee the wages of teachers, according to the SZDSZ, the wages have to be decided in local bargaining. A Dodonian education program came out of these two completely different education concepts. And it turned out that the local bargaining very well serves the financial restriction.

[Bertok] If Pavarotti were being strangled from behind while singing on the stage, he probably would not be able to give a good performance. How can any kind of program be implemented amid restrictions?

[Szollosi] It is impossible to talk about any kind of program while the fiscal view rules in government. Too many deputies are interested in matters that make them unconditionally support the current economic policy. The MSZP is a multicolored party but it basically has two interest groups. One is interested in the government's current policy and the other group is disturbed by the fact that a different program is being implemented to with which the party won the elections.

[Bertok] Can you identify the latter group?

[Szollosi] It can more or less be identified as the Hajos group.

[Bertok] Is there a chance for this group to become dominant, or will the basic differences of views sooner or later lead to a split in the MSZP?

[Szollosi] I do not know if it will become dominant. At any rate, every politician has to account for their own votes to their electors, in 1998 at the latest. I accept responsibility for all my votes. Acting in public is our only weapon. Society voted for the program we represent, rather than the one represented by the Finance Ministry. For those who really want to make a socialist party out of the MSZP, it is rather unpleasant that company owners and businessmen are directing the party from the second line. Pure social democracy is missing from the political map and this is untenable after a while.

[Bertok] For those who think the same way as you, would it not be practical to find a party in which social sensitivity is not a simple slogan?

[Szollosi] When I accepted the MSZP's request for my nomination, I thought that I would be able to have a greater influence on the events if I were also close to the center. This has proved true.

[Bertok] But you recently said that you would never present another plan to the Finance Ministry....

[Szollosi] This is not the first time that, when the trade unions present a concrete proposal to the Finance Ministry which is not only a list of demands but it also names the sources, then the minister expresses thanks for it, accepts the sources, and we are not given anything. Lajos Bokros [former finance minister] did the same, and this is when I said never again.

[Bertok] Am I correct that you do not agree with the statement that no alternative exists to the current financial policy?

[Szollosi] Of course it has an alternative! Why would it be the only way that we put all our hopes into the money taken away from education which amounts to 7 percent of the budget, while we do not talk about the state deficit which takes away a third of the budget? I completely share Sandor Kopatsy's [not defined] views on this. When the tax morale is as it is, when huge debts cannot be recovered, when an incredible amount of money which has not been laundered is out there, then why is the money only taken away from people living on wages and salaries?

[Bertok] In your portrait film called "The Madame General Secretary" you said that there are too many Bolsheviks in the MSZP. Whom did you mean by this?

[Szollosi] This is a type of person, who respects authority, a yes-man, who can actually be found in all parties. This is a generational characteristic because many people were unable to get rid of the attitudes learned in the dictatorship. Unfortunately, they are at the beck and call of the leaders of the day, even when they know that they are not fulfilling their electors' wishes with their votes.

Hungary: Statistical Office Issues Data on 1995

AU0403181696 Budapest NEPSZABADSAG in Hungarian 1 Mar 96 p 5

[Correspondent's report: "Improving Balance, Deteriorating Financial Situation"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The current balance of payments deficit decreased by almost one-third in 1995; thus, the central budget deficit in 1995 decreased by 44 percent compared with the 1994 deficit. The fact that we succeeded in halting the rapid deterioration in the balance of payments was the major economic characteristic of 1995. All this transpires from the latest report of the Central Statistical Office.

According to the analysis, the stabilization results were accompanied by several unfavorable phenomena, like the slowing down of economic growth and the deterioration in the financial situation of a considerable number of people. The rate of growth of industrial production also slowed down; however, it still exceeded the 1994 figures by 4.8 percent. This growth was based on the expansion of exports: exports increased in all the industrial sectors in 1995. Exports of engineering industry and food industry products increased most dynamically: by 44 percent and 22 percent respectively. Domestic sales of industrial products in 1995 lagged behind the 1994 figures, and this is the result of the restrictive economic policy.

The annual foreign trade deficit stood at $2.6 billion in 1995, $1.3 billion less than in 1994. This improvement was primarily due to the increase in exports. The gross savings of the population stood at 2,151 billion forints [Ft] at the end of December 1995, 25 percent more than at the beginning of 1995. The overall credits of the population dropped by 7 percent.

The rate of price increases was higher in 1995 compared with the previous three years. In addition to the changes in government set prices, central measures—like exchange rate policy and additional customs duty—also played a decisive role in this increase. The surplus supply deriving from a decrease in demand had a moderating effect on the prices. The biggest increase took place in the prices of household energy and foodstuff in 1995, while the smallest increase took place in the prices of alcoholic beverages, tobacco, and clothing. The average monthly gross payment of full-time workers employed in enterprises with more than 10 employees stood at Ft38,900 in 1995, a 16.8 percent increase compared with 1994. The net value stood at Ft25,900, or 12.6 percent. The net wages in the budget sector increased at a lower rate than the average, including an increase of only 6 percent in education and 7.9 percent in health and social care. Real wages in the national economy as a whole decreased by 12.2 percent, in education by 17.3 percent, and in health and social care by 18.8 percent.

B-H: Muratovic on Economic Aid Delay, Situation in Bosnia

AU0703184796 Zagreb VECERNJI LIST in Serbo-Croatian 6 Mar 96 p 7

[Interview with Hasan Muratovic, prime minister of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, by Azra Kaurin; place and date not given: "Dayton Has Resolved Sarajevo"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Upon his return from Iran, where the delegation of Bosnia-Herzegovina discussed economic aid for reconstruction of the country, we talked with Hasan Muratovic, prime minister of the central government.

[Muratovic] Since the war is over, we needed to reconsider our relations in new conditions. We discussed long-term economic cooperation, which means that we shall be working out joint projects. Some of those projects were launched before the war. During the visit we spent most of the time discussing the establishment of a fund for employment possibilities for the families of fallen defenders, invalids, and demobilized soldiers. Financial means for the establishment of the fund will be provided by Iran. Possibilities of founding a joint bank were also discussed.

There Are No Mujahidin in Bosnia-Herzegovina

[Kaurin] Did you talk about Iranian nationals based in Bosnia-Herzegovina?

[Muratovic] We talked about that as well. We issued a joint statement for the public, in which we condemned any sort of terrorism as a method of struggle, regardless of goals one wants to achieve. There were many speculations in the public about our center for police training. We took on a commitment that all the Iranian nationals who are not employees with diplomatic missions would leave Bosnia-Herzegovina within one month after the signing of the peace accord. There are no more Iranians in Bosnia-Herzegovina, save those who work for diplomatic missions or in culture.

[Kaurin] Are there still any mujahidin left in Bosnia-Herzegovina?

[Muratovic] All of them have left Bosnia-Herzegovina. The international presence is so great in Bosnia that nothing can be easily concealed. We fulfilled our obligation, perhaps not within one month, but we did it in a very short time span. We announced this as soon as there were no more such foreign citizens in Bosnia-Herzegoina.

Aid Arriving Too Slowly

[Kaurin] Soon it will be two months since you have taken on the function of prime minister of the republican government of Bosnia-Herzegovina. How is it functioning?

[Muratovic] Although not all matters have been finalized after the separation of the republican and the federal governments, I can tell you there is not a single obstacle that would call its work in question. There are certain affairs we used to handle, but their number is quite small. This does not mean there are any problems between the Croats and the Bosniaks.

[Kaurin] What is the biggest problem that your government is encountering in its work?

[Muratovic] The greatest problem is employment and economic recovery. We have taken these two as our priority goals. The international community is not fulfilling its commitments anticipated by the peace accord regarding aid and economic recovery. Only the EU has been fulfilling its commitments so far, while other factors have been doing that either not at all or at an unsatisfactory level. The U.S. Congress has not still passed a decision on aid to Bosnia-Herzegovina. At the meeting in Brussels a $60-million aid package for Bosnia-Herzegovina was announced. If we had gotten that aid, we could have already created jobs for several thousand demobilized soldiers and started production in a number of companies. An even bigger problem is that many donor countries are waiting to see what the United States will do. The World Bank has been putting off extension of aid to Bosnia for a long time as well. We were expecting much greater and more expeditious aid on the part of the World Bank.

According to the Constitution and Agreements

[Kaurin] Even after Dayton, Sarajevo has remained an open issue. The Croats in Sarajevo are dissatisfied with the future arrangement of authority in the city. How are authority matters to be arranged, and everybody's interests to be satisfied?

[Muratovic] That is very simple, one ought just to work heeding the Constitution and agreements accepted in Dayton and Washington. There are no single-nation cantons. All the cantons are organized in the same way. Cantonal authorities ought to be organized to suit the structure of the populace. The Croats will certainly always have, and they do have, more political power than their percentage of national participation. It is so even today. There is an agreement signed by Croatian officials, who signed other agreements as well, according to which Sarajevo is supposed to be organized as a canton. Among the signatories is Federation President Kresimir Zubak as well. Perhaps representatives of the Croatian people in Sarajevo are not familiar with what HDZ [Croatian Democratic

Community] officials in Bosnia-Herzegovina signed. In the letter of protest issued by the City Board of HDZ Sarajevo it is not said what a district is. Only the Contact Group's plan refers to a district. The issue of Sarajevo has been resolved in Dayton. The question of city authorities cannot be resolved in a different way. Viewing statements of the Croatian side, it is not clear to me what they actually demand. If they demand a district, they do not specify what that means, whether that presupposes parity, which is unacceptable. In my opinion, a logic organization of Sarajevo is that of a canton.

Mostar and Bugojno

[Kaurin] Joint police forces are patrolling throughout Mostar. How do you assess the current situation in Mostar?

[Muratovic] The best assessments has been made by [EU administrator] Koschnick: As long as certain people who represent executive authorities in Mostar are still there, a normal situation, as defined by the documents signed, will be impossible to accomplish. In Mostar there are people who are actual rulers, while politicians who accept that occasionally make speeches for the media in their favor. Those who make speeches cannot do anything to encourage the implementation of the agreements signed. This is a tragedy of real relations in Mostar. When those accused of war crimes and war profiteers leave and their influence disappears, only then will all the agreements be implemented in Mostar. This is a difficult process, and we must not give it up, because we know where the problem is.

[Kaurin] Bugojno is also one of the major problems. Croats insist that neither the return of their refugees or human freedoms have been made possible for them. On the other hand, Bosniaks link the issue of Bugojno to their return to Stolac.

[Muratovic] In Bugojno there are around 1,000 Croats living there. The people who are in power there demand that a model be used that is conditioned by refugees' return to Stolac. As far as I know, in Stolac a hundred houses have been selected for the return of families. According to some information, they are being encouraged to return to Stolac, while according to some other information, they are being threatened not to return there. I am sure that the problem will be resolved by joint effort. When the issue of Stolac is settled, the issue of refugees' return to Bugojno will be settled as well. In Stolac there are no Bosniaks at all. This is a problem of which the Federation is in charge.

Economic Relations and Politics

[Kaurin] How do you assess overall relations between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia after the latest meetings between the two governments?

[Muratovic] I am very satisfied with relations between the governments of the Republic and the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Republic of Croatia. We made a big breakthrough by signing six agreements in Split. It ought to be pointed out that over the past two years we have not signed a single agreement. We signed agreements on refugees and transit visas, whose implementation failed. By 14 March we are obliged to prepare a new package of agreements. The relations between the two states may be judged by the number of agreements signed that are being implemented. This greatly helps our efforts to make the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina function. I have no doubt that we shall develop relations between the two states that will certainly be exemplary in the region. We have no other choice. Our orientation is to arrange economic relations at the highest level. If the economic relations between the two countries function, and if the general policy is in agreement with those relations, then individuals and groups will not be able to do much about it.

[Kaurin] After the visit to Banja Luka and talks with representatives of the Serb entity, how do you assess developments in that part of Bosnia-Herzegovina? Will the Federation and the Serb entity be able to start functioning at all?

[Muratovic] They will definitely start functioning, but there are no new impetuses until the Pale leaders, who started this war, leave. Nothing has changed there. Prime Minister Kasagic is interested in economy and wants changes. Personally, I doubt that he can accomplish what he wants. Within the framework of his desires we discussed the resumption of payment operations and trade, provided we control the borders toward Serbia and Montenegro. Kasagic said he would think about it. The question whether he will succeed in this before the elections and the arrival of new people in politics remains open.

I Hope for the SDS's Defeat

[Kaurin] There is not much time left until the elections. What do you expect to happen afterward?

[Muratovic] I do not expect that in the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina anything dramatic will happen in the election. In the Serb Republic I hope that the SDS [Serbian Democratic Party] will lose, that new parties will appear and take over power. That would be good for Serbs as well, because in such a way they would begin getting rid of a fascist party and its fascist concept. A big question is what those new parties are, and what new ideas they offer. I believe that the SPS [Socialist Party of Serbia], Milosevic's party, will play a significant role. After the elections I expect big changes and the beginning of the functioning of connections between the two entities. We shall never be able to forget what the Serbs did and are still doing to us. It will take a long time for the state created in Dayton to begin functioning.

[Kaurin] What is the state of President Izetbegovic's health like? Do you know whether the president will run in the presidential elections?

[Muratovic] I do not know whether President Izetbegovic will run in the presidential elections. It would be normal if he would. As for his health, we are already visiting him for consultations. He is working, although from a hospital room and under physicians' watchful eyes.

[Box, p 7]

[Kaurin] The implementation of the Dayton accords on the ground is not progressing as quickly as was envisaged. Where are the main obstacles to be found, in your opinion?

[Muratovic] Obstacles occurred because the commitments agreed on are not being fulfilled. The office of Carl Bildt and the United Nations made a big mistake with regard to the civilian police, that should have been given a mandate to perform some very important duties. They left the Serb police in suburbs of Sarajevo, which was a signal to the Serbs to start looting property and destroying the entire economic infrastructure there. They took with them all that could be removed from factories and other institutions, so they no longer had a reason to stay. The Pale regime told the Serb populace there that their places of work had been moved to the Serb Republic, so they had no reason to stay in Sarajevo any longer. Thus, the international community, consciously or unconsciously, helped carry out what had already been decided in Pale.

B-H: Zubak Demands 'Speedy' Territorial Reorganization

AU0703193396 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1800 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kresimir Zubak, president of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, is demanding a speedy solution to the municipal, administrative-territorial organization of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Starting from the need for a territorial reorganization of municipalities and their adjustment to the new organization of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, President Zubak is invoking the Vienna agreement and the agreement between the Federation partners that, and I quote, where there is a justified interest based on the unified criteria in accordance with the Constitution, the municipal borders can be constituted and changed, end of quote.

In his letter sent today to Ejup Ganic, vice president of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Federation Prime Minister Izudin Kapetanovic, Justice Minister Mate Tadic, the leaderships of the Party of Democratic Action and the Croatian Democratic Community, and the representatives of organizations in charge of the implementation of the Dayton agreement, Zubak stresses that the examples of European countries could be used in the division of state territory into municipalities, countries that are small by territory and number of people but have a large number of municipalities. Examples of this are Slovenia, Croatia, Austria, and Switzerland.

The definition of a municipality as the basic unit of local self-rule in the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina will require changes in the territorial and political organization. The municipalities should be established for areas that make a natural geographic entity, where there are economic and other conditions for a certain number of people to achieve their ethnic rights and local self-rule. According to the Constitution and the decision on the criteria for the establishment of new municipalities or the change to their existing borders in the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the municipalities, Zubak stresses, are founded in areas where the citizens can exercise their ethnic and other rights, and areas that represent natural geographic entities and consist of one or more towns connected by roads. The lowest number of people for constituting a municipality is 4,000. The constitution of new municipalities or the change to existing borders cannot be used to create enclaves that are not part of a municipality and have no conditions for the constitution of a separate municipality on their territory. A municipality cannot be constituted in areas where over 50 percent of the people of one ethnic group have been moved out, unless the Federation Assembly gives its approval for this change, says Kresimir Zubak's letter.

B-H: Kapetanovic: Federation Police Are Not Muslim

AU0703204296 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1800 GMT 7 Mar 96

[Report by Mirsad Behram from Mostar]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Behram] East Mostar Mayor Safet Orucevic, EU Administrator Hans Koschnick, and Carl Bildt's deputy Michael Steiner attended the first part of the [Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina Government] session. West Mostar Mayor Mijo Brajkovic did not attend the session of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina Government today, and we have learned that he justified his absence by saying that he had not been told in time when the session would take place. However, we have found out from reliable sources that all the participants in today's session had been told in time about its start.

The Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina Government sat in session behind closed doors today. After that a news conference was held in which Prime Minister Izudin Kapetanovic and his deputy, Drago Bilandzija, addressed reporters.

Prime Minister Kapetanovic said that today they had discussed the tasks facing the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina Government on the implementation of the Dayton and Rome agreements. A set of decisions has been made on the establishment of a joint customs at the Federation level. The session also dealt with personnel solutions in customs management, tax policies, and payment operations.

According to Kapetanovic, the government today supported the part of the Rome agreement dealing with Mostar, and promised all possible help in its implementation, particularly in the process of forming a unified administration in the city, in forming new districts, cantons, and the organization of the central city zone. Within 10 days, a decision will be made on the location for the Federation institutions in Mostar as envisaged by Dayton.

The government today tasked the Finance Ministry to prepare the draft 1996 budget proposal for the Federation by 20 March. The Finance Ministry will take the necessary measures to establish payment operations on the entire territory of the Federation. Prime Minister Kapetanovic says that the Justice Ministry has also been tasked to prepare the draft law on cantons for the next session of the Federation Government. The municipalities of Bugojno, Jajce, Stolac, and Travnik have been asked to implement the pilot programs for the return of the displaced people to these towns as soon as possible. The defense minister and his deputy have been tasked with drafting as soon as possible the draft law on the defense of the Federation so that this law can be put through quickly.

One of the reporters' questions referred to the ethnic composition of the Federation police force that took control of some of the Sarajevo suburbs. After one of the reporters said that this was the Muslim police, as he put it, Prime Minister Kapetanovic said:

[Begin Kapetanovic recording] The Federation police entered the areas of Vogosca, Ilijas, and Hadzici. The Federation police consists of policemen of all three ethnic groups in accordance with the 1990-91 census. I do not know where you got this Muslim police idea. This is the Federation police and its composition is controlled by the high representative and the international police force, even partly by the Implementation Force, and such policemen receive accreditation. The areas of Ilidza remain to be reintegrated, and the Federation police will enter Ilidza of a balanced ethnic composition as it was in 1990-91.

The only problem now is that there are demands that the Federation police should wear special uniforms. We are working on the solution to that problem. The government wants this problem solved as soon as possible. [end recording]

[Behram] Deputy Prime Minister Drago Bilandzija has announced a meeting for 1900 [1800 GMT] in Sarajevo, which will be attended by top level EU representatives and leaders of the Federation to deal with certain misunderstandings concerning the composition of the Federation police forces around Sarajevo.

The prime minister also denied decisively certain information that the Serb Federation policemen were allegedly Bosniaks with false papers.

B-H: NATO Denies Broadened IFOR Mandate Imminent

AU0803130796 Paris AFP in English
1205 GMT 8 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sarajevo, March 8 (AFP)—NATO peacekeepers denied Friday that they are about to have their mandate broadened as top-level decision-makers and military commanders met in the Bosnian capital for a review of the alliance's operation in Bosnia.

The 16 permananent representatives of the North Atlantic Council, NATO's highest political body, the alliance's deputy Secretary General, Sergio Balanzino, and General George Joulwan, supreme allied commander for Europe flew into Sarajevo Friday.

"There has been a lot of speculation in the media...(over) possible new orders for IFOR in Bosnia," said Major Simon Haselock, spokesman for the NATO-led peace Implementation Force (IFOR).

"The speculation has taken the tack that NATO has issued or was about to issue orders giving IFOR an expanded mission," including guarding war crimes sites and hunting down war criminals, he continued.

"The facts are that the purpose of their visit is not to issue new orders to IFOR but to get a first hand look at the forces that have been sent to Bosnia by 32 nations," he added.

NATO's peacekeeping Implementation Force has been in Bosnia since last December and is charged with overseeing the implementation of the Dayton peace accords signed in Paris last year.

The delegation was to meet the chief of the 60,000-strong NATO-led multinational peacekeeping force (IFOR) in Bosnia, Admiral Leighton Smith, and other senior IFOR commanders.

IFOR officials said the delegation would also meet the acting president of Bosnia, Ejup Ganic.

B-H: IFOR's Gen Nash Chairs Tripartite Military Talks

AU0703163196 Paris AFP in English 1542 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tuzla, Bosnia-Herzegovina, March 7 (AFP)—The commander of NATO troops in northeast Bosnia Thursday [7 March] chaired a meeting of senior commanders of the former warring factions, an AFP correspondent said.

Eight Bosnian Serb, Croat and government Army commanders from the northeastern Bosnia region met U.S. General William Nash Thursday at a checkpoint 50 kilometres (30 miles) north of here to discuss military aspects of peace implementation.

The meeting came after weeks of slow progress with the so-called joint military commission (JMC) meetings, which were hampered by a two-week Serb boycott of the NATO-led peace Implementation Force (IFOR) last month.

The meeting was the highest-level JMC ever held in the U.S.-supervised northeast sector of Bosnia.

Representing the Bosnian Serbs were General Radislav Krstic of the Bosnian Serb Drina Corps, Major General Budimir Gavric of the East Bosnia Corps and General Momir Dalic of the 1st Krajina Corps.

Representing the Bosnian Army were Brigadier Sead Delic of its 2d Corps, Brigadier General Sakib Mahmanuljin of the Bosnian Army 3d Corps and Brigadier Salih Malakic of the 28th Division.

Representing the Bosnian Croat (HVO [Croatian Defense Council]) forces were Brigadier Djuro Matuzovic of the Orasje HVO and Brigadier Drago Dragicevic of the Vitez HVO.

The brief rupture in ties between IFOR and the Serbs followed the arrest and extradition of two senior Serb officers to the UN war crimes court in The Hague.

Contacts were restored late last month.

The meeting, which started at 1200 GMT, was still in progress Thursday afternoon.

B-H: War Crimes Suspect Jelisic Denies Charges

BR2902164996 Amsterdam DE VOLKSKRANT in Dutch 29 Feb 96 p 5

[Report on interview with suspected Serbian war criminal Goran Jelisic by Bart Rijs in Bijeljina; date not given: "Me a War Criminal? I Am a Nice Guy—Wanted: Goran Jelisic, a Bosnian Serb of Slim Build With Dark Blond Hair and Brown Eyes"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Bijeljina—His photo is missing from the 10,000 posters featuring war criminals on the run issued to NATO soldiers in Bosnia. He is only described on it as a Bosnian Serb of average height, with a slim build, dark blond hair, and brown eyes.

Goran Jelisic looks with amusement at his description and name on the poster. Together with 50 other Serbs and Croats he is accused by the Yugoslavia Tribunal of committing war crimes.

According to the prosecutor, the 27-year-old garage owner killed 14 Bosnian Muslims while he was in charge of a concentration camp in Brcko, in northern Bosnia. Hundreds of Muslims and Croats were killed in the camp by shots in the neck in the spring and summer of 1992.

Survivors say that the victims were forced to put their head on the grille of a sewer drain, so that the murderers had as little cleaning as possible afterwards.

At the start of this year, foreign reporters discovered a mass grave where hundreds of Muslims from Brcko are said to lie, covered with the rubble of three mosques which were demolished by the Serbs in August of the first year of the war.

"How can I be a war criminal, I am a nice guy," says Jelisic. To prove it he embraces his young wife and gives her a kiss on the cheek. In a three-hour interview in his flat in Bijeljina, where he lives with his wife and five-month-old daughter, he maintains rigidly that he is completely innocent.

He shows a photo in which he poses in uniform laughing with Muslim friends, leafs through his diary to show the phone numbers of Muslims from the area who have fled abroad, and offers to fetch a Muslim family whom he helps get medicines for their baby.

"During the entire war I was stationed in the logistics base in the neighborhood of Brcko," he says. "The only thing I did was repair tires and balance cars."

Jelisic differs little from other Bosnian Serb soldiers, except maybe for his uneasy eyes and the bitter line which continually forms round his mouth. He has been wounded six times, he lets slip later. In 1994 he was declared 80 percent unfit for active duty—according to an official document of the Bosnian Serb Army which Jelisic shows voluntarily—due to paranoia.

Many people in his town of Bijeljina are a little afraid of Jelisic. At school he was already strange, it is claimed in the small town. He was unable to learn well at school and was a tractor driver in a collective farm when the war broke out in Yugoslavia. Jelisic, then age 23, had large debts, and left as a volunteer for the front in Croatia.

"When I was on leave, I walked in my camouflage uniform and with my pistol on my hip through the town," he remembers. "The people thought that I was in some kind of special unit." He came to be on terms of hostile looks and insults with some Muslims and Croats.

On 26 December 1991 he was taken prisoner by the Croats. "They hung me by my feet from the ceiling," says Jelisic. "They tortured me for three days and a couple of times they pretended they were going to execute me. I escaped by jumping from a window on the second floor. I did not care at all whether I might die, I simply could not stand the pain anymore."

While he was recovering at home in Bijeljina from his wounds, the tension in Bosnia increased. "When I came back, the Muslims wanted to beat me up," says Jelisic. "No, I felt no need for revenge. We Serbs do not bear hatred, we are people who quickly forget."

When the ethnic cleansing started in May 1992 in northeastern Bosnia, Jelisic once again reported for one of the volunteer brigades. The rumor spread that the Muslims had stored weapons in the mosque and were planning to attack their Serbian neighbors. That failed, explains Jelisic, because the Muslims are "a nation of idiots and fanatics."

Afterwards, he went to fight near strategic Brcko, which was the only link between Serbia and the areas in the west of Bosnia and Croatia in Serbian hands. In August 1992, nearly all the Muslims and Croats, who had made up 70 percent of the population, had been driven from the small town on the Sava River. The International Yugoslavia Tribunal speaks of "systematic slaughter" which is reported to have cost the lives of 3,000 people. During this time, in a torture camp by the river port, Jelisic and his right-hand man Ratko Cesic are reported to have committed the series of atrocities which would later come to appear on an accusation of genocide. "All lies by jealous and mad Muslims," says an agitated Jelisic. "Ratko! He was so drunk he could not even hold a gun, he only was a women chaser."

To prove this statement, he calls his old comrade and lets those present listen while he tells him laughing about the poor likeness of Ratko's photo on the NATO wanted poster.

"It is not the people who defended their nation who should be condemned, but those who started," Jelisic thinks. "Just like Hitler wanted to kill all Jews, in the same way the Americans, Catholics, and Muslim fundamentalists want to kill us."

The Serb often contradicts himself: At one moment he is talking about Turks and "balije" (shit-Muslims), a little later he says sincerely that he would gladly play handball with his Muslim friends again. "We do not hate one another," he says. "The hatred has been spread by our leaders, there is the same suffering on their side as on ours. For every Muslim who accuses me of crimes, I can find five who can testify that I have helped them."

He claims that he can easily prove his innocence. Therefore, Jelisic has no objection at all to being questioned by the tribunal's prosecutors, as long as it happens in the Serb Republic in Bosnia. He is not afraid of the NATO soldiers he sees in and around the town every day.

"Those people are one big joke," sneers Jelisic, making a dismissive gesture. "Yesterday I went past one of those U.S. bases. I waved hello. They will never get me. At least not alive."

B-H: Hague Court Asks Belgrade To Extradite Two Suspects

AU0703211296 Paris AFP in English
2049 GMT 7 Mar 96

[AFP headline: "War Crimes Tribunal Asks For Two Bosnian Serbs"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Hague, March 7 (AFP)—The prosecutor of the UN war crimes tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, Richard Goldstone, has asked the authorities in Belgrade to transfer two men to The Hague for questioning, it was announced Thursday [7 March].

They are Radoslav Kremenovic and Drazen Erdemovic.

In a statement, the pair were identified by the tribunal as members of the Bosnian army [as received].

B-H: Serb General: Arrests Are Reprisals for Djukic Case

AU0703201296 Paris AFP in English 1957 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Checkpoint Alpha Two, Bosnia-Herzegovina, March 7 (AFP)—Bosnian Serb army commanders urged peacekeepers Thursday to do more to free hundreds of civilian detainees and prisoners of war held in violation of the Dayton accords.

Speaking after a top-level meeting at a checkpoint of the NATO-led peace implementation force (IFOR) in the separation zone, they said it should use military muscle if necessary to free PoWs and other civilians arrested over recent weeks.

"The Serb side is not satisfied with the way our prisoners are being treated," Serb General Momir Talic told journalists. "We want all of them to be released no matter what side they belong to."

"They have to be released, and IFOR must have a greater influence in this," he added, saying the peace force, whose mandate does not extend to matters of prisoner detention, should "open up the jails and let the prisoners out...by force" if necessary.

The release of prisoners, which should have been finished almost two months ago under the Dayton peace accords, was the biggest issue still dividing the former warring factions and IFOR after Thursday's meeting, commanders said.

The Bosnian Government is known to hold at least 131 prisoners, the Serbs have been registered as holding 23 and the Bosnian Croats four, but dozens of others suspected of involvement in war crimes are also being held.

In addition, the Bosnian media has reported that as many as 14 Moslem civilians were apprehended Wednesday in Serb-controlled territory near this checkpoint.

"I think they should be released," said U.S. General William Nash, commander of NATO troops in northeast Bosnia, who chaired the joint military commission (JMC) meeting.

"The requirements of the Dayton agreement are to release all prisoners and have freedom of movement for all civilians," Nash said.

But Talic said the rogue detentions were merely reprisals for the "illegal" arrest of two senior Serb officers, one of whom has now been charged with war crimes by an international tribunal in The Hague.

"The arrest of General (Djordje) Djukic was illegal and it has resulted in the arrest of people who have crossed the zone of separation," Talic went on, referring to the indicted officer, saying the tribunal should not be allowed jurisdiction over suspected war criminals in former Yugoslavia.

"The state to whom the war criminals belong is the state who should prosecute them," he added.

Other commanders at the meeting also identified the issue of the detention of military and civilian prisoners as a major stumbling block to a full peace implementation.

"We discussed the prisoner problem at the meeting," said Brigadier Djuro Matuzovic of the Bosnian Croat (HVO [Croatian Defense Council]) army's Orasje contingent. "I hope all sides can find an agreement on this."

The eight commanders who met under IFOR auspices also discussed compliance with upcoming deadlines laid out in the Dayton agreement.

"All parties are cooperating fully," Nash said when asked if the meeting signified a greater commitment to the peace process by the Bosnian Serbs.

The Serbs froze ties with IFOR and boycotted a number of meetings after Djukic was arrested in late January, but Nash stressed that since ties were restored in February, IFOR had enjoyed a "very fine working relationship" with them.

B-H: Karadzic Sees Two or Possibly Three New States

LD0703184896 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 7 Mar 96

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The exodus of Serb refugees from Sarajevo continues. We are not pushing anyone from here, Radovan Karadzic told Vesti, but neither can we force anyone to stay here. [passage omitted]

According to the leader of the Bosnian Serbs, Radovan Karadzic:

[Begin recording] [Karadzic, in Russian] There will be no (single) state but there will be a union of two states.

[Unidentified correspondent] Or three.

[Karadzic] Or three, because the Croats want to have their own state. [end recording]

B-H: Gangs of Serbs 'Threatening' Grbavica Residents

AU0703153196 Paris AFP in English 1218 GMT 7 Mar 96

[Report by Adrian Brown]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sarajevo, March 7 (AFP)—Tension is mounting in Serb-held suburbs of Sarajevo ahead of their transfer to government control with gangs of thugs burning homes and threatening those that want to stay, UN officials said Thursday [7 March].

"We are very concerned about the remaining population in the Grbavica area where virtually every night there's a fire in a building.... The atmosphere is getting more and more tense," Kris Janowksi, spokesman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), said.

Grbavica is one of only two remaining city suburbs still held by the rebel Serbs out of the five that are reverting to Bosnian Government control under Bosnia's Dayton peace accord.

Three others are already under the effective control of the mainly Muslim Bosnian Government who moved in to find the areas deserted by their Serb inhabitants who fled fearing retribution for the city's brutal siege.

A frontline area jutting into the city centre, Grbavica, has seen many of its Serb inhabitants leave while the authorities have organised or allowed comprehensive asset stripping of the area.

Shops, schools, and other facilities have been shut down leaving a lawless vacuum where gangsters have moved in to terrorise those that want to stay.

The most vulnerable, Janowski said, were elderly people who had barricaded themselves into their apartments to wait the scheduled handover of Grbavica on March 19.

"Some of them have received visits from thugs saying that they should leave or they will be smoked out. The market has been dismantled, very few shops are open, schools are closed while one of them has been burnt down. It's hardly an encouraging situation to stay," Janowski said.

In Ilidza, the other suburb due to transfer on March 12, factories and houses have been stripped of windows, furniture and doors while medical services have been shut down. Janowski said the UNHCR was trying to support local doctors who have stayed by getting an ambulance for them to visit the sick and infirm.

International peacekeepers are deployed in these areas but they have limited themselves to guarding key utilities such as water pumps and electricity power stations.

UN police also have a presence in the transfer areas but their mandate is only to monitor, not to enforce law and order.

B-H: UN Reports 'Growing Anarchy in Serb-Held Suburbs'

AU0803130996 Paris AFP in English 1219 GMT 8 Mar 96

[By Adrian Brown]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sarajevo, March 8 (AFP)—UN aid officials warned Friday of growing anarchy in Serb-held suburbs of Sarajevo, reporting the murder of a Moslem woman and systematic intimidation and arson.

The woman, in her mid-60s, was murdered on Wednesday night in the Serb-held suburb of Grbavica by unknown assailants, Kris Janowski, a spokesman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said.

"During the night...the assailants entered her apartment.... We were alerted to it by her neighbours who heard screams but of course were too afraid to come to the rescue," he said.

Grbavica, and another suburb, Ilidza are the two city districts that remain under Serb control, and are to be passed in coming days to the control of the mainly-Moslem government.

"There is a continued campaign of harrassement and brutality and arson, both in Grbavica and Ilidza," Janowski said.

"There are gangs of people going from house to house threatening the remaining population, both minority and Serb, telling them to get out because their house is going to be next," he added.

Tens of thousands of Serbs have fled the districts reverting to mainly-Moslem government control fearing retribution for the brutal seige Serb forces imposed on the capital for over three years.

Schools, work places and apartment blocks have been stripped of materials.

In Ilidza, the building which houses the UNHCR office will "soon be the only one in that building with any furniture in it," Janowski said.

He added that the asset stripping and cycle of violence appeared "well planned, systematic and it is intensifying."

"The murder case worries us extremely and we think the remaining lives of the minority and the Serbs that remain (in the these suburbs) are threatened," the aid spokesman said.

Though NATO peacekeepers said Friday that their presence was being increasd in these areas, they have declined to get involved in fire fighting or policing the suburbs.

This job was the "responsibility" of the local Serb authorities in conjuction with the UN police force who are there to monitor, Implementation Force (IFOR) spokesman Major Simon Haselock said.

"I would like to see some firefighters there. IFOR has offered to provide security for government fire fighters but they are too afraid to go onto the other side," Janowski said.

"What we worry about is that people seem to be trapped in their apartments. The Serb fire fighters will not do it and IFOR does not have the gear to put out fires."

B-H: IFOR To Intensify 'Presence Around Sarajevo'

AU0803132496 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1300 GMT 8 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] UNHCR Spokesman Chris Janowski stated today that a Bosniak woman over 60 years was killed in Grbavica two nights ago. He voiced concern over the continued forceful expulsion of people who wish to remain in this Sarajevo quarter, which according to the Dayton agreement belongs to the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation.

Janowski said that the woman was attacked at about 2300, and that the neighbors heard cries from her apartment. He added that the police of the so-called Serb Republic arrived on the scene of the crime a few hours later, taking away the body of the killed woman.

Our impression is that the exodus of the people from Grbavica is systematic and well planned, Janowski assessed. The UNHCR spokesman added that UNHCR office has received two reports on people being beaten up in Grbavica over the last few days.

Chris Janowski said that the majority of crimes are committed between 2100 and 0100, when the Implementation Force [IFOR] does not patrol the town. IFOR spokesman (Simon Hythlock) said today that IFOR's presence around Sarajevo would be heightened.

B-H: New Fires Reported in Formerly Serb-Held Suburb

AU0803102296 Paris AFP in English 0946 GMT 8 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] SARAJEVO, March 8 (AFP)—A railway station and a factory in Sarajevo districts abandoned by thousands of Bosnian Serbs were burnt down overnight, the NATO-led peace Implementation Force (IFOR) said Friday.

French IFOR fire fighters brought the blaze in Blazuj under control but not before the fire had destroyed the war-damaged railway station in the formerly Serb-run district. A neighbouring factory was also destroyed, IFOR said.

IFOR has in recent weeks reported a series of apparently deliberately-set fires in Serb-held districts of Sarajevo which are reverting to the control of the Moslem-led Bosnian government.

Thousands of Serbs have left the districts and aid and military officials in Sarajevo have accused Bosnian Serb leaders of organising looting and arson of what the Serbs leave behind.

B-H: Ilidza Mayor: Efforts Not Yielding Expected Results

LD0703175096 Belgrade SRNA in Serbo-Croatian 1330 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Ilidza, 7 Mar (SRNA)—Nedjeljko Prstojevic, the mayor of the Serb municipality of Ilidza, told SRNA today that the situation in this Sarajevo municipality, which under the Dayton agreement is due to come under the authority of the Croat-Muslim Federation on 12 March, is dramatic.

"All the efforts being made by our state and political leadership, government, and relevant ministries are not yielding the expected results and are not meeting all the needs of evacuation of these densely populated municipalities," Prstojevic said and added:

"In a short period of time, some 9,000 households need to be evacuated, because the Dayton agreement, and all agreements that followed it, failed to guarantee the safety of persons and property of the Serb people in these areas and 99 percent of the citizens have decided to leave their homes, land, and birthplaces." [passage omitted]

The organized evacuation of Serbs from the part of the Serb municipality of Ilidza, which under the Dayton agreement is due to be entered by federal police on 12 March, was accelerated today, as the long columns of vehicles leaving in the direction of Lukavica and Kasindol and onward into the territory of the Serb Republic confirmed.

B-H: Muslim Mayor Calls on Serbs To Stay in Ilidza

LD0703215696 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 2100 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] As there is only four more days before Ilidza goes back to the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Husejin Mahmutovic, interim mayor of the Ilidza municipality, has called on citizens who are currently living there and who used to live in Ilidza before the aggression. Here is yet another call to those who have not stained their hands with blood to remain in Sarajevo:

[Begin Mahmutovic recording] I would like to call on the Ilidza Serbs to stay in their houses and their apartments. Do not be taken in by any propaganda. We personally wish and can promise a peaceful life and tolerance. We promise security and protection equal for everyone. The federal police force is made up of all three Bosnian nations—Serbs, Croats, and Bosniaks. The criterion for their selection is not determined by their nationality but by their professionalism. This is a firm guarantee that all will be treated equally.

Recently, we held meetings with Ilidza Serb representatives. In these contacts, which took place in the presence of international mediators, we agreed on a number of political and practical issues. It is obviously important that the Ilidza Serbs will also be included in executive and legislative authorities of the municipality. We have agreed on a number of practical issues, such as health service, education, employment, freedom of movement, personal papers, and so on. We have done everything to create a high degree of trust. We sincerely care for the Serbs in Ilidza to remain in their houses and apartments. It is up to them to (?recognize) and make use of our will. [end recording]

B-H: Serbs Torch Ilidza Buildings as NATO Chiefs Meet

AU0803184396 Paris AFP in English 1812 GMT 8 Mar 96

[By Adrian Brown]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Sarajevo, March 8 (AFP)—Bosnian Serbs torched buildings in a Sarajevo suburb where top NATO decision-makers and military commanders were meeting Friday [8 March] to review progress in implementing Bosnia's troubled peace accord.

Bosnian Serbs torched factories and a court building in the Serb-held Sarajevo district of Ilidza where NATO's top political body met after flying into the city early Friday.

With tension rising in the suburbs due to switch to mainly-Moslem government control, two factories blazed and a court building was set on fire and destroyed.

Explosives were put inside to hasten the demise of the structure.

A UN aid official had earlier warned of growing anarchy in Ilidza and the other Serb-held suburb—Grbavica—which is reverting to government control.

Kris Janowski, a spokesman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), said there was a "campaign of harrassment and brutality and arson," in both districts.

The incident went almost unnoticed by NATO officials and Sergio Balanzino, deputy Secretary General of the alliance, prefered to concentrate on the NATO mission, telling reporters the NATO peacekeepers in Bosnia have no new orders to track war criminals, only the authority to assist civilian agencies on a "case by case" basis.

"There are no new guidelines or mandate given by the North Atlantic Council (NAC)," Balanzino, told reporters in the Bosnian capital referring to the alliance's political body.

"IFOR commanders have been given the authority to judge on a case by case basis to examine how to assist (Bosnia's) High Representative (Carl Bildt) and other international organisations within the limits of their mandate and within the ability they have been given," Balanzino said.

Bildt, who is responsible for the civilian aspects of Bosnia's peace plan was also present at Friday's meeting.

He recently put in a string of requests to IFOR for technical assistance in helping him in his task which nearly three months into the peace process is taking on more significance. [passage omitted]

B-H: SGV's Pejanovic: Pale Serbs Dividing People

AU0703151196 Paris AFP in English 1410 GMT 7 Mar 96

[Report by Edina Neretljak]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sarajevo, March 7—While few residents of Sarajevo regret the mass exodus of their former Serb besiegers, Bosnian officials said Thursday [7 March] they fear that the flight of the Serbs marks the final division of Bosnia along ethnic lines.

"They besieged us, they bombed us, and watched us leaving our homes without shedding a tear.

"Why would I feel sorry that the tide has turned against them?" asked Azra, 56, a Muslim refugee from one of Sarajevo's Serb-held suburbs.

International agencies estimate that 60,000 Serbs have in recent weeks left five city suburbs reverting to the Muslim-Croat federation under the Dayton peace treaty.

Meantime, there are an estimated 75,000 Muslims waiting to return to the homes from which they were expelled by the rebel Serbs.

"I'm happy that the Serbs have gone because of everything they did to us," said Nermin Abaz, another refugee.

Returning Wednesday to the home he was expelled from in 1992 by Serbs, he said the few Serbs that had stayed on transfer should also go.

"It would be better for all of us," he said.

The Bosnian Government however accuses the hardline Bosnian Serb leadership of pressuring the Serbs into leaving by whipping up fear of reprisals.

"Nobody from the Bosnian side is chasing them away," the Muslim mayor of Sarajevo, Tarik Kupusovic, said Wednesday.

But, he added, many are afraid "that having been passive observers of the crimes committed against the city during the siege they could be held guilty for that."

The Serbs who have left are being resettled mainly in northern and eastern Bosnia into the abandoned homes of Muslims and Croats.

"This is a temporary victory of the Serb policy of ethnic grouping, of having everybody in their national ghettos," Esad Zgodic, a professor of political science at Sarajevo University, told AFP Thursday.

"When the Serbs from Sarajevo settle in Foca, Brcko and other towns in eastern Bosnia, which Muslims and Croats will return to their homes? Nobody," he said.

According to Mirko Pejanovic, a Serb member of Bosnia's collective Presidency: "The rebel-Serb regime is finishing the way it has started the war—by dividing people."

Pejanovic is also the chief of the Serb Civic Council (SGV), an organisation of Serbs loyal to the mainly Muslim government, some 40,000 of whom remained in the capital throughout the war.

He believes, the Serb exodus from Sarajevo will have long-lasting consequences on the distribution of Serbs, Muslims and Croats in Bosnia.

Before the war, the ethnic map of Bosnia represented a patchwork of all three communities. Now however, the different groups have been shoved into more or less ethnically "exclusive" areas.

"The grouping will remain for a long period and whether it will cement itself will depend on the quality of democracy and economic reconstruction of the country," Pejanovic said.

While the Bosnian Serb and Croat leaders have actively sought to separate their communities from the Muslims, the Muslim-dominated Bosnian Government has avowed a multi-ethnic Bosnia.

The treatment of those Serbs who remain in government-held areas will be "a real test" for the mainly-Muslim ruling Party of Democratic Action (SDA), Zgodic said.

B-H: ICRC To Start Aid Program for Sarajevo Serbs

AU0603174596 Paris AFP in English 1709 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Geneva, March 5 (AFP)—The International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC] is starting a massive humanitarian aid programme for Bosnian Serbs who have fled homes in Sarajevo, the aid agency said in Geneva Wednesday.

Tens of thousands of Serbs have fled Sarajevo in recent weeks ahead of the transfer of Sarajevo districts to the control of the mainly-Moslem government.

The ICRC will over the next three weeks distribute 20,000 blankets, 30,000 candles, 25,000 food parcels, and thousands of pairs of boots and shoes, it said.

ICRC officials based in the Serb stronghold of Bijeljina, northeast Bosnia, said hundreds of Serbs have been forced to sleep rough and/or lodge in inadequate conditions after fleeing their homes around Sarajevo.

International agencies in Sarajevo have criticised the hardline Serb authorities for provoking the flight of the Serbs with wild propaganda playing on the Serbs' fears of reprisals by the Moslems for the brutal three-and-a-half year siege of the Bosnian capital.

Serb leaders have appealed for international aid for the Serbs.

Some 60,000 Serbs are expected to flee Sarajevo districts by later this month. Many of them are expected to be resettled in former Moslem homes in towns in north and east Bosnia, including the disputed town of Brcko.

B-H: 'Minor Diplomatic Incident' After Zagreb Talks

AU0803190396 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 8 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A government delegation of the Republic of Croatia will be visiting Bosnia-Herzegovina on 14 March, it was announced at a news conference in Zagreb today by Miro Lazovic and Mariofil Ljubic, chairmen of the Republic and Federation Assemblies respectively, and Vlatko Pavletic, chairman of the Assembly of the Republic of Croatia. The delegations were received today by President Tudjman and Prime Minister Matesa. A news conference was held at which, in a manner of speaking, a minor diplomatic incident took place. Here is a report from Zagreb by Nada al Issa:

[Al Issa] The brief talks with President Tudjman touched on overall relations between the Republic of Croatia and the Republic and Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. On this occasion the Croatian president again promised, as he put it, all Croatian help in solving existing and newly arising problems.

Prime Minister Matesa announced a further meeting of the two government delegations, as we said, on 14 March in Sarajevo and expressed hope that this would also deepen cooperation.

The three leaders of the assembly delegations, Lazovic, Ljubic, and Pavletic, stressed that the Federation was the key to peace. Pavletic said that there were problems and excesses, but that they had to be solved immediately, the moment they occurred. For an ever better and speedier furthering of cooperation with Bosnia-Herzegovina, he said, a special committee would be founded in the Assembly for Cooperation with Bosnia-Herzegovina. This committee's experts will also visit Sarajevo soon.

Bosnia-Herzegovina Assembly Chairman Miro Lazovic, just as Pavletic had, pointed out that there were still different interpretations of the Dayton agreement, but, he said, he did not understand some reproaches to Bosnia-Herzegovina regarding its wish to reintegrate Bosnia-Herzegovina after the Federation and the Dayton agreement.

The Dayton agreement is a painful compromise, but we have accepted it and now the political struggle is coming for the reintegration of Bosnia-Herzegovina. In this respect, Bosnia-Herzegovina publicly announces to everybody, the entire international community and others, that all forces that oppose reintegration must be defeated. In this connection, Lazovic says and believes, even those Serbs who are now leaving their homes under the horrible propaganda from Pale, will in time start returning to Bosnia-Herzegovina. Lazovic pointed out that the problems of Mostar and Sarajevo are being unnecessarily worsened.

Mariofil Ljubic, chairman of the Constituent Assembly of the Federation spoke on the return of refugees and pointed out in particular that there could be no peace without their return and that the return to Bugojno and Vares should begin at the same time as [words indistinct].

The reply from Vlatko Pavletic, chairman of the Assembly of the Republic of Croatia to our question on Croatia's stand on the events in Hadzici, was in fact a criticism, namely, that the Federation police who entered Hadzici consisted, he said, of 100 Bosniaks and not a single Croat, and the Republic of Croatia will not be able to remain disinterested if, as Pavletic stressed, the Croats in Sarajevo are threatened, if they are not given leading posts, and if they are again threatened with expulsion.

Miro Lazovic replied to Pavletic's assertion by saying that the Federation police has been formed strictly according to the number of citizens and that this is carefully observed. He gave the example of Vogosca, where there are as many as [number indistinct] percent of Croats, although Croatian citizens were only 7 percent in Vogosca.

Pavletic reacted to this again by claiming that the Federation police should be structured according to the census and number of citizens before the war.

B-H: Croat Troops Said Regrouping in Southern Croatia

AU0703135496 Paris AFP in English 1340 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Mostar, March 7 (AFP)—Bosnian Croat forces (HVO) have recently regrouped in a area of southern Croatia close to Bosnian territory held by Bosnian Serb troops, a western military source said Thursday [7 March].

The source, who did not say how many troops were involved, said the move could be aimed at allowing the HVO soldiers to avoid the demobilisation of all Bosnian forces supposed to take place by April 20, under the Dayton peace agreement for Bosnia.

The arrival of HVO troops in the area, where Croatian Army already has thousands of its own troops, could also be intended to intimidate the Bosnian Serbs who hold land overlooking the nearby port of Dubrovnik and have long demanded a route through to the sea, the source said.

B-H: HVO Reportedly Obstructing Freedom of Movement

AU0703171096 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 7 Mar 96

[Report by Refija Kulasin]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] All the agreements signed on the freedom of movement and respect for human rights from when the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina was constituted until the latest peace agreements reiterating this lead one to expect a high degree of their implementation in practice, but the examples that we will give show that the level of human rights achieved on territory under the control of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army is not the same as that on the territory under the control of the Croatian Defense Council [HVO] in the central Bosnian canton.

The fact that this situation is very serious and that these problems have to be urgently solved if serious incidents are to be avoided, was illustrated today to reporters by [word indistinct], chairman of the Main Committee of the Party of Democratic Action for Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Dzevad Vaso, chairman of the cantonal committee.

They said that there was no freedom of movement on the territory of the Vitez municipality. One hundred fifty Bosniak families from the village of (?Vratka) cannot use the two-and-a-half kilometer paved road that they themselves made to get to the main road, but instead they have to take a 12-kilometer detour through the woods. Because of this, one heart patient recently died as his transport took too long. A pregnant woman from the village of Bukve also died because of the length of the trip, as 100 Bosniak families from the village of Bukve cannot use the main road, but have to take a 15-kilometer detour. [passage omitted]

The Kiseljak-Zabrdje road is also closed. In the center of Kiseljak, the last monument that was the symbol of Bosniaks was recently destroyed. In the village of (?Zabilje), the Muslim cemetery was demolished on the second day of Bayram. The Bosniaks have to pay between 50 to 500 German marks at checkpoints for the passage of their trucks. The Kiseljak HVO recently prevented the Bosniaks of Kresevo from visiting Haremi, even though they had announced this visit to the relevant authorities.

In the Jajce municipality, the road to Divoluci has been closed, while the entry of Bosniaks into the town is limited and has to be announced in advance. [passage omitted]

B-H: HVO Police Set Up Checkpoints in Central Bosnia

AU0703200296 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1800 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Members of HVO [Croatian Defense Council] military police yesterday conducted traffic checks on access routes to Gornji Vakuf, which caused apprehension among citizens. Bajro Ljubuncic reports:

[Begin Ljubincic recording] All the drivers on their way to Gornji Vakuf yesterday afternoon came in for a unpleasant surprise.

At the access roads to the town from the direction of Prozor and Bugojno, at the village of Karamustafic and near the former branch of the Borac clothes factory, HVO police from Potisje carried out inspections and searches of drivers and their vehicles, regardless of whether their license plates were civilian or military. In addition, a checkpoint was put up at the very demarcation line in the center of the town.

Since this unusual traffic control came about without any advanced warning whatsoever, the reason for such conduct by the HVO police is unknown. Whether this was just a reflection of events in Hadzici or the beginning of efforts by Croatian officials to draw public attention away from Mostar to Gornji Vakuf remains to be seen.

In all this, it is interesting to note the behavior of the Implementation Force [IFOR]. At one of the HVO checkpoints yesterday, HVO police shot at a luxury car owned by a Bosniak. British IFOR troops stationed there did not react to this incident, and luckily enough nobody was wounded. After protests by the suburban Gornji Vakuf police station to the police station in the town center, all the illegal checkpoints were removed in the afternoon.

This is the second incident between the two ethnic communities since the accord on the Federation was signed. However, the Federation obviously does not exist here, because the town, two years after the cessation of hostilities, is still divided into two parts along the lines that used to be trenches dug long ago.

In central Gornji Vakuf, which is Croat-held, Bosnia-Herzegovina dinars are not accepted as a valid currency, while in suburban Gornji Vakuf, which is Bosniak, nobody accepts the [Croatian] kuna. Both parts of the town have their own police forces, so a joint Federation police force is still out of the question. In addition, there are separate postal services and school and health care systems, while political life has not gone beyond the inaugural assembly of the Transitional Municipal Council and the appointment of its chairman and the town's mayor.

The current situation in Gornji Vakuf may best be reflected by a comment of a local citizen, who bitterly says that in Gornji Vakuf there are actually two towns leading completely separate lives. [end recording]

B-H: Croats Accuse Muslims of Violating Agreements

LD0703180196 Mostar Croatian Radio Herzeg-Bosna in Serbo-Croatian 1700 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Branimir Colic, head of the [Bosnian Croat] defense department, was stopped at a Muslim army checkpoint in Tisovci, Vares municipality, yesterday [6 March]. Having been kept at the checkpoint for some time and unable to cross over to Dastansko, Colic returned to Kiseljak. On the same day, members of the Muslim army dealt in the same way with several members of the fourth battalion of the military police from Vitez, who were kept at the checkpoint and then forced to return to Vitez.

Despite all the peace agreements, the Muslim side has continued blatantly to violate all signed documents, thus calling into question the Bosnia-Hercegovina Federation itself, the political administration of the Defense Ministry of the Croat Republic of Herzeg-Bosna announced.

B-H: Authorities Oppose Croat Referendum on Zepce Borders

AU0703161396 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 7 Mar 96

[Report by Sefik Mujkic in Begov Han]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Mujkic] It is very clear what the deadlines are for establishing the authorities and civilian life within the Federation in accordance with the Dayton agreement.

However, to judge from what the Croatian Democratic Community [HDZ] has been doing, it is hard to believe that this will be the case at least when it comes to Zepce, since a new referendum organized to establish new municipal borders is leading in the opposite direction, which is, according to the HDZ, in the interests of the Croats of the area.

To find out more about this referendum and its goals, we have been speaking to Mr. Sefik Zvekic, president of the Zepce Municipal Presidency, with its temporary seat in Begov Han:

[Begin recording] [Zvekic] According to our information, the Croatian Community of Herzeg-Bosna and the Croatian Defense Council [HVO] in Zepce have called for a referendum for 17 March 1996. Serious preparations are under way for the referendum, and meetings are being held between the representatives of the districts. The local radio is constantly going on about the referendum and the districts are preparing to vote. The citizens of Croatian nationality in Zepce, Maglaj, and Zavidovici [word indistinct] are supposed to vote on the change of Zepce's municipal borders. According to the HVO's plans, this municipality should consist of all the villages in the Zepce municipality with a Croatian population, including those that are currently under the control of the legal authorities of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the villages from the Maglaj and Zavidovici municipalities.

They are proposing that the Zepce municipality include the villages with a mixed Bosniak-Croat population, such as the village of Golubina, the town of Zepce—which used to be 80 percent Bosniak—then Vitlac, a part of which is exclusively Bosniak, (?Ozinica), [words indistinct], Novi Seher, (?Biletic), and villages with a large Bosniak majority, such as (?Kopici), (?Cobe), Dubravice, [words indistinct]. In accordance with the plans by the authorities of the so-called Herzeg-Bosna, part of the town of Zavidovici would become part of this municipality, that is, the entire left side of it up to the border with [word indistinct].

[Mujkic] The Bosniak population is also supposed to vote in the referendum. What is the attitude? What will the legal authorities of the Zepce authorities in Begov Han do? What [words indistinct] to the Bosniak population in Zepce?

[Zvekic] To us this referendum is illegal and Bosniaks should not vote in it, since their participation [words indistinct]. [passage omitted] [end recording]

B-H: Travnik Croats Protest Muslim Looting, 'Obstruction'

LD0103191296 Mostar Croatian Radio Herzeg-Bosna in Serbo-Croatian 1700 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] While implementation of the agreements is proceeding without any difficulties in Mostar, Croat houses and property in Travnik are systematically burned and destroyed to prevent the return of Croats to this town. Federal officials and representatives of the international community have been informed about the conduct of the Muslim side in Travnik. Zvonimir Cilic reports:

[Cilic] While the Muslim side is boasting that it is cooperating in the implementation of the Dayton agreement in Travnik, the Croats—dissatisfied with the situation in this municipality—are calling on the highest-ranking federal and international community officials to help them. In its letter sent to Kresimir Zubak and Ejup Ganic, federal president and vice president respectively; High Representative Carl Bildt; mediator for the Federation Christian Schwarz Schilling; and Ivan Bender, speaker of the Herzeg-Bosna Chamber of Deputies; the Travnik municipal leadership based in Nova Bila gives a series of examples of the obstruction of the peace agreements, violation of human rights, and looting and destruction of Croat property, all of which are preventing the expelled Travnik Croats from returning.

The letter also says that the western part of the Travnik municipality, which before the clashes with Serbs and Muslims had a majority Croat population and did not suffer destruction during the war, has been exposed to mass looting and destruction since the Dayton agreement. For instance, some 20 houses were burned down in the villages of Podkraj, Djelilovac, and Paklarevo, while the remaining houses were literally stripped from anything that could be removed, leaving just the bare walls.

For this reason we beg you, the letter says, to take measures to protect that which can still be protected. Failing this, there can be no question of the Croats returning to Travnik for quite some time, especially since all Croat villages in the eastern part of Travnik municipality were destroyed and burned down a long time ago.

We are also asking senior federal and international officers to allow us to exhume 36 Croat civilians and soldiers who were killed upon arrest and buried in a mass grave in the village (Maljine Bikosi). We have certain information that some remains had already been exhumed and burned to conceal traces of the crime.

The Travnik municipal leadership also warns senior federal and international officers about a failure to implement part of the Dayton Agreement, according to which all foreign citizens—members of army units—were supposed to leave Bosnia-Herzegovina by 14 January. The infamous mujaheddin—who committed serious crimes against Croats in central Bosnia—can still be found in certain villages of Travnik municipality. All the attempts so far to resolve the above problems with the Muslim authorities in power produced no results and help is now expected from the federation and the international community, the Travnik municipal leadership says at the end of its letter.

Croatia: Assembly Officials, B-H Assembly Delegates Meet

AU0703155596 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 7 Mar 96

[Report by Nada al Issa on news conference by Bosnia-Herzegovina Assembly delegation and Croatian Assembly officials in Zagreb on 7 March—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [al Issa] Following two and a half hours of talks, reporters were told very little but they were promised more information tomorrow at the end of the two-day official talks.

Here is what they were told in a two-minute news conference by the leaders of the delegations.

Croatian Assembly Chairman Vlatko Pavletic stressed:

[Pavletic] These talks went as expected among friends interested in solving problems and not suppressing them. The talks were open and constructive, and they will most certainly lead to a much more intensive cooperation between the Bosnia-Herzegovina Assembly, the Assembly of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the Croatian Assembly. I hope that my colleagues, Chairmen Lazovic and Ljubic, share my opinion.

[al Issa] Bosnia-Herzegovina Assembly Chairman Miro Lazovic added:

[Lazovic] I would like to join Mr. Pavletic in his assessment. I think that with today's meeting we have opened up more concrete cooperation between the two assemblies, that we are in line with the agreements and talks between the governments of the two countries, and that with today's talks we have given an impulse and motivation to those forces who favor the intensification of the peace process. I am sure that this cooperation will continue and I believe that we will soon see the two assembly delegations holding talks in Sarajevo.

[al Issa] As for Mariofil Ljubic, deputy chairman of the Republic Assembly and chairman of the Constituent Assembly of the Federation, the most important issue is the following:

[Ljubic] Today's talks [words indistinct] we openly discussed the issues that have been plaguing the implementation of the Dayton agreement and the Federation of Bosniaks and Croats. We have raised some issues and solved some. I hope that these two-day talks will help to remove problems and that the Federation will be implemented with greater speed and as it should be in the interests of the Bosniaks and Croats. That is in the interest of this region and certainly in the interests of both the Republic of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

[al Issa] This is what we found out officially. However, unofficially I have learnt that the so-called hot topics of Sarajevo and Mostar were also on the agenda and that an unpleasant cloud hung over the talks—why did the Croatian police try to enter Hadzici yesterday before the Federation police and the Implementation Force?

Croatia: Granic, Swedish FM Discuss Dayton, Trade

LD0703190496 Zagreb Radio Croatia Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Dr. Mate Granic, deputy prime minister and foreign minister of the Republic of Croatia, is on an official visit to the Kingdom of Sweden. Vera Tomasek reports from Stockholm:

[Tomasek] Dr. Mate Granic discussed the improvement of bilateral relations and economic cooperation in particular with his Swedish counterpart Lena Hjelm-Wallen. The foreign ministers discussed human rights and more rapid implementation of the Dayton Agreement on the ground, because Swedish troops are also part of the peace Implementation Force in the region. Minister Granic says of his visit:

[Begin Granic recording] Sweden is a member of the European Union and the most influential Scandinavian country in the European Union, in particular with regard to human rights and the state of democracy in a country. It can play an important role in the European integration of the Republic of Croatia.

On the other hand, Sweden has a strong presence in our region in the form of the Swedish battalion, the negotiators, including Mr. Carl Bildt, who is a former prime minister, and through considerable humanitarian aid.

Trade between Croatia and Sweden amounts to around $150 million, although Croatian exports to Sweden lag greatly behind imports.

The main aims of my visit are to improve considerably economic cooperation and obtain Swedish support for Croatian integration into Europe. Talks on the implementation of the Dayton Agreement and Croatian support for the [Bosnia-Herzegovina] Federation and the whole of the Dayton Agreement will be especially important. We expect that Sweden will offer strong support for the peaceful reintegration of eastern Slavonia, Baranja, and Western Srem into the Croatian constitutional and legal system. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Croatia: International Arrest Warrant Issued for Martic

*AU0803110196 Paris AFP in English
1051 GMT 8 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Hague, March 8 (AFP)—The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia on Friday issued an international arrest warrant against former Croatian Serb separatist leader Milan Martic.

It was delivered to the NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR) enforcing the Dayton peace accords on Bosnia.

The tribunal upheld an indictment issued in July 1995 against Martic, who is accused of ordering a devastating shelling attack on civilians in Zagreb on May 2 and 3 last year in which at least seven people died.

He "knowingly and deliberately ordered the bombardment" by Orkan rockets that allegedly "killed and injured civilians in Zagreb," Judge Claude Jorda said at the one-hour hearing here.

He said Martic had several times admitted giving the order and that he was responsible because of his position, and because he did not prevent or punish the actual perpetrators.

Martic is a former president of the self-proclaimed Croatian Serb republic of Krajina which fell to Croatian government forces in August last year, after which he fled to Belgrade.

Warrants were issued for Martic's arrest and sent to authorities in Zagreb and Belgrade last year, as well as to Krajina just before it fell, but he has so far remained free.

The latest warrant was issued after another hearing on February 27, again in his absence, at which the prosecution sought to show that the districts shelled in Zagreb were inhabited only by civilians and contained no military targets.

Croatia: Refugees: More Killed in 'Storm' Than Admitted

*AU0703215396 Banja Luka Srpski Radio Network
in Serbo-Croatian 1800 GMT 6 Mar 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Referring to Croatian Helsinki Committee information, the Association of Serb Refugees from Croatia reported today that the discovered killings and destruction in the Lika area are another sign that the Croatian authorities do not want Serbs to return.

The Association has evidence of the existence of 223 graves in the Glina cemetery that are marked as containing unknown persons. The letter says that this [word indistinct] indicates that the number of the persons killed established after Operation Storm is much greater than was initially assumed.

The Association also referred to the information presented by LE MONDE of 26 February 1996, which is that 1,000 more Serbs disappeared after Operation Storm and that no one knows what happened to them.

The silence of the Croatian state committee for search of the missing persons is highly indicative; it shows that the real number of those killed on the occupied territory of the Republic of Serb Krajina is much greater than the officially acknowledged figure of 450.

Croatia: 4,000 Men Reported Sexually Abused in War

*AU0703133896 Zagreb VECERNJI LIST
in Serbo-Croatian 7 Mar 96 p 6*

[Article by Gordana Rebic: "Silent Victims of Pathological Aggressors"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Zagreb—For months, I.M. was haunted by images of what he had lived through. His wife was killed in the camp, his daughter raped before his eyes, after which he himself was raped. His dreams were nightmares. When conscious, he could not erase from his mind the image of his daughter calling out to him: "Help me, daddy!" He felt guilty because he could neither help her nor himself, so he committed suicide....

It has been assessed that some 4,000 men from Croatia have been sexually abused during the war! The problem of sexually abused men has mostly been neglected in the public. However, a recent convention of medical, legal, and other experts, at which Eric Carlson, legal adviser to the team for investigating sexual abuse affiliated with The Hague Tribunal, and Patricia Sellers, legal adviser to The Hague for sexual crimes, drew attention to the horror with which the victims of the aggressor's pathological behavior live. The increasingly frequent suicides of victims of this insane act are the last emergency call. It is high time that relevant institutions and experts help the victims through a systematic approach.

The three-day convention was organized at the initiative of the Medical Center for Human Rights in Zagreb, a nonprofit, nongovernmental, and nonpolitical organization that extends medical, psychological, and social aid to all victims of war. Sexually abused men are just one of the categories of people, victims of war, who are in dire need of psychological counseling. Although thousands of men were sexually abused, the center is treating only 150 of them. [passage omitted]

Croatia: Change in Germany's Attitude Toward State Noted

AU0803124996 Zagreb HRVATSKI OBZOR in Serbo-Croatian 4 Mar 96 p 10

[Commentary by Goran Rosic: "The End of Croatian Deference"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The recent unpleasant events in and around Mostar have imposed onto our public an interest in other open issues regarding the obvious estrangement in Croatian-German relations recently. That fact has been additionally intensified by the fact that Koschnick himself, whose decision it was that directly made the situation in the town on the river Neretva more complicated, is a German. Therefore to some it seemed that just because of Koschnick the gravest accusations concerning Croatian policy toward the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and concerning the Bosnia-Herzegovina Croats had been arriving from Germany. However, is that really so?

For the blocking of Koschnick's car was the signal for the beginning of a frantic and utterly open anti-Croatian campaign in the German media. The campaign resembled last year's, when they wanted to "press" President Tudjman to change his mind about the canceling of the UNPROFOR [UN Protection Force] mandate. The gravest accusations then and now have been written by the journalists, conditionally stated, of social-democratic orientation. Having used the "Koschnick case" as the reason on this occasion, too, they have launched the old-new theses among Germany's general public that President Tudjman does not give up some kind of Greater Croatia, that Bosnia-Herzegovina politicians do not want coexistence with the Bosniak-Muslims, that official Zagreb protects extremists, and so on. This media campaign has been joined by official policy with almost the same accusations. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Klaus Kinkel, has gone even further, and hurried to blackmail Zagreb with economic help. He has also applied the tested recipe for "pressures," having appeared in Zagreb to procure Croatian acceptance of the division of Mostar. However, his visit and talks with his colleague Granic have only confirmed the difference in Croatian and German considerations and in their approach to the problems of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation.

Germany's New Task

The talks in Rome have shown that the attempt of the most recent German "disciplining" of the authorities in Zagreb have not yielded any result. But what is even more important is reflected in the fact that Koschnick's arbitration has been changed. That proved that Bosnia-Herzegovina Croats have been right not to accept a solution at their own expense. And precisely with that example one should look for the cause of the estrangement in relations between Zagreb and Bonn. Further, the whole anti-Croatian campaign in the German media gets a completely different meaning.

For it is obvious that Germany, which at the beginning of the aggression of the former JNA [Yugoslav People's Army] on Slovenia and Croatia directly defended their right to independence, and because of that was attacked by the majority of the European centers of power, changed its policy toward them after their international recognition, particularly toward Croatia.

After the Dayton agreement it became crystal clear why. The Dayton agreement has brought peace and stability to the whole of Europe, and Germany, in the new European order, has been given the task of the economic recovery of Russia and all the states that appeared through the disintegration of SFRJ [Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia]. In that way, beside the United States, it has become the chief supervisor of all that is going on and that will be going on in this region.

In line with such a role, Bonn allows itself also some meddling into some internal Croatian affairs. However, as the Republic of Croatia, after Operation Storm and Dayton, has secured its territorial integrity and as Croatia wants to appear in international relations as a sovereign and independent state, without a tutor, many, including Germany, have had objections about it. For they cannot accept the fact that "Croatia no longer obeys." The world public has received a picture of President Tudjman as a person in whose hands all the authority in Croatia has been concentrated, so one does not have to wonder at the majority of the accusations being directed on his account.

Kinkel's Offer to Croatian Opposition

That is today's reality and it has to be accepted as such. However, the puzzling thing in all this is the behavior of a part of the Croatian opposition and its champions. Not understanding or not wanting to understand such processes in the naked power struggle, they are also ready for some arrangements that would once again make some kind of colony out of Croatia. With such an approach to the political struggle and by accusing the present authorities wherever and whenever they can, and particularly abroad, they become an ideal means of trying to "discipline" Croatia, and if possible—remove the present leadership from office. Thus Kinkel, on the occasion of his recent visit to Zagreb, as we have been unofficially informed, offered an organized appearance of the opposition in Germany and media coverage in order to explain the situation in Croatia today to the world. Allegedly, he even offered German financial support to those parties that would accept that. One champion has accepted that.

All the aforementioned warns about the fact that in politics everything is allowed and that in international relations there are no friends. Interest is the only criterion for behavior in politics. The best proof of that thesis is the alternating behavior of German official policy toward Croatia. When Germany found it suitable, it protected us, but also when it suited it, it attacked us most. Therefore it is time for everybody in Croatia to liberate himself from the imposed illusions and realize that only a politically united Croatia can defend on the international scene the vital interests of the Croatian nation as a whole. The pressures will continue, but if there is no unity, everything we have achieved over the last six years will be brought into question. The battle for an independent and whole Croatia is still going on. Taking the internal specks of dirt out of the borders of Croatia helps only those who would like to control us, supervise us, and oversee us.

Croatia: Unions Start Petition To Prepare General Strike

*AU0803082596 Paris AFP in English
1736 GMT 7 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Zagreb, March 7 (AFP)—Croatia's main trade unions on Thursday [7 March] began distribution of a petition to factories and work places throughout the country, aiming to whip up backing for a general strike later this month.

"We started distributing the petition today (Thursday). We hope we will get more than 400,000 signatures," Dragutin Lesar, the president of the Society of Independent Unions of Croatia (SSSH) said.

The SSSH, the largest trades union organisation in Croatia, late last month announced it would call a general strike later this month if the government did not agree to a higher minimum wage and changes to a range of laws governing salary negotiations and social costs.

The unions would be ready up until March 15 to meet with Prime Minister Slatko Matesa to discuss the claims, Lesar said.

"We want real negotiations," the union leader said. "We are determined to start a general strike," around March 20 if there is no real negotiation, he added.

If it took place, the strike would be the first in Croatia since it gained its independence from Belgrade in 1991.

It would be also be the most significant sign of social discontent since the Serb rebellion in Croatia was crushed last August.

Croatian President Franjo Tudjman, who knows he cannot dismiss social discontent lightly after his rightwing ruling Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) party scored a weaker than expected victory in legislative elections in October, has nonetheless attacked the strike plans.

The strike "is the work of people wanting to overthrow the democratically elected Croatian authorities," he said last month.

Government ministers have meanwhile dismissed the unions' claims as "unrealistic" and liable to "wreck the state's budget."

Croatia: Zagreb Assembly Rejects Tudjman-Appointed Mayor

*LD0703181796 Belgrade TANJUG in English
1800 GMT 7 Mar 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Zagreb, March 7 (TANJUG)—The City Assembly of Zagreb gave Thursday a vote of no confidence to Marina Matulovic-Dropulic of the ruling Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), who was appointed Zagreb mayor on Monday by President Tudjman.

The assembly proposed Ivo Skrabalo as new mayor. Skrabalo is the candidate of the coalition of seven opposition parties which won 64 per cent of the vote at the local city election last year.

This marks a culmination of the political crisis in Zagreb which goes beyond the city to spread throughout Croatia because the events in the capital have severely strained relations between the opposition and the HDZ.

Opposition parties sharply warn that in Zagreb the election results are not respected and that the governing party is doing all to preserve its rule in the capital although it was overwhelmed at the elections.

Skrabalo is a third candidate mayor proposed by the opposition since its so far the biggest political success. He is likely to experience the fate of the previous two candidates, Goran Granic and Joza Rados, whose appointments were turned down by the Croatian president.

This situation suggests that in slightly more than two months, early local elections can be expected in Zagreb.

By then the Croatian Government could appoint a deputy who would also act temporarily as mayor.

Being aware of the political climate in Zagreb, the opposition looks forward to its still more convincing electoral triumph relative to its past results.

Developments in Zagreb are closely watched also by international institutions which have very disfavourably reacted to the moves by the HDZ and President Tudjman.

The Council of Europe's congress of regional and local authorities has recently addressed to Zagreb a letter voicing 'regret over the Croatian president's refusal to endorse the election of the mayor of Zagreb.' It appraised that this refusal was a flagrant violation of the principle of plural democracy and local self-rule advocated for by the Council of Europe.

Croatia: DEHOS Said To Promote 'Neo-Yugoslav Synthesis'

AU0803113696 Split SLOBODNA DALMACIJA in Serbo-Croatian 5 Mar 96 p 4

[Commentary by Zoran Vukman: "A Test-Tube Baby"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Croatian political scene, still substantially confused and inadequately defined from left to right, burdened by the quantity of parities and ideological baggage from the past, has proved to be fertile soil for all sorts of political experiments, exhibitionism, and the simulation of all sorts of great projects and great ideas on the part of small-time merchants of West European demagogy and the supporters of the dogma about unconditional, European unionism, and supranationalism.

In this context, the phenomenon of DEHOS [Democratic Croatian General Assembly] is an interesting and bizarre idea thought up by Dr. Paul Werner about a socialist synthesis on the Croatian political scene conceived in a laboratory somewhere in Germany. The ideological test-tube baby of this controversial political obstetrician or obstetrical politician came to life in Croatia as the Apollo of its democracy. However, it is more likely that it would be an ideological Frankenstein that would not have a chance in life considering the image designed by Dr. Werner: the fair face of the Croatian Social Liberal Party [HSLS], the strong body of the Sabor Alliance 1995, and the brains and upbringing of the mother and father, the "little coalition" of the ASH [expansion unknown], Social Democratic Alliance [SDU], Croatian Independent Democrats [HND], and the Dalmatian Action [DA]. Such a Down's Syndrome crossbreed is inconceivable even for the Croatian center and right, and also for the national left because it would be a synthesis of the impossible under the auspices of a foreign factor that has not even politically presented itself to the Croatian public, yet has appeared on it with the idea, no less, of coming to power via unbelievable coalitions!

Eureka

What is DEHOS? The Croatian public has not yet received an answer to this, except for the heap of political stereotypes and distortions in its statement, replete with grand and great words about liberal and social democracy, but which in themselves are nothing more than Dr. Werner's demagogic persuasion regarding the enlightening and redeeming sponsor role of the famous DEHOS, which is being offered as an "ingenious" political eureka for the Croatian opposition scene. Is DEHOS an association, party, political service and headquarters, informal group of leftist intellectuals, or an abstract alliance created by Dr. Werner's ideological deduction? Mr. Werner would first erect the roof, and only then dig the foundations and build the walls for his building, for which the only realistic anchorage is in the parties of the so-called little coalition, whose reputation within the comprehensive Croatian electorate is measured by a small percentage of votes?

In any case, Werner's coalition combination, no matter how ridiculous, pretentious, or paradoxical, is actually a cunning, strategically conceived political game with DEHOS as a platform for strengthening marginal leftist parties in Croatia, parties with open or latent pro-Yugoslav orientation. The legitimacy of Croatia's opposition (and its dissatisfaction) would be used as the force and critical mass for the establishment of Werner's "opposition alliance." His idea is quite daring and humiliating for the Croatian opposition—it involves bringing insignificant parties of the extreme left to power in Croatia by way of the large coalition of DEHOS and a strong HSLS and Sabor Alliance 1995! A grandiose design, no doubt! Particularly if you take into account the fact that DEHOS is not investing anything into the partnership, it is not bringing any dowry, but is offering the opposition its ideas, and the name DEHOS as Dr. Werner's innovation patented in European institutions and with Europe's blessing!

The Offer

Although it may come from a political adventurer or eccentric, it is still too much, and if it is a concrete offer of foreign, economic, and political sponsorship for the Croatian opposition, providing it unites against President Tudjman, as dictated by the "little coalition" as the ideological and synthetic amalgam DEHOS, then it is surely a serious political plan that cannot be concealed behind pure eccentricity.

The plan, which in a calculating way promotes DEHOS as the headquarters (although as yet unidentified in personnel and intellectual terms) of someone's political and economic power, has serious ambitions to invade the opposition's very core through the cracks on the Croatian political scene and thus to plant a large, coalition election bomb aimed at winning over 50 percent of the vote.

At first glance this sounds like a very attractive plan for the opposition, but it is logical to ask of what use would DEHOS be to it? A slightly bigger percentage of votes? What is Dr. Werner actually offering? It is hard to believe that Mssrs. Tomcic, Caccic, Tomac, and other opposition politicians would fall for his tactical seduction and actually join political arrangements of this type, even if the HDZ, with its rash internal policy, has been unconsciously pushing them toward political experiments like Werner's or Soros's because it is quite certain that in this case, the Croatian Peasants Party [HSS], the HNS, and the Social Democratic Party of Croatia [SDPH] would commit political, collective party suicide.

We must not neglect the fact that in politics many things depend on the vanity of charismatic individuals; we are yet to learn whether Dr. Werner, by stressing Vlado Gotovac as the great man of Croatian political honesty (and perhaps future presidential candidate), is "reckoning without his host" and flattering Gotovac's vanity by publicly flirting with his ambitions, or whether something else is at stake. If Tomac and Dr. Separovic have presidential ambitions, then Werner's "wooing" means more to them than simply flattering their vanities—it represents a call for cooperation and the search for people in Croatia with political and moral credibility on the basis of which DEHOS would build Croatian references, thus dispersing doubt that it is a pro-Yugoslav leftist organization. In return, Gotovac would set out toward the realization of presidential ambitions on the wings of DEHOS, and become the "Croatian Havel." For this is what can be deducted from Dr. Werner's political logic.

The Formula

DEHOS, therefore, is offering the Croatian opposition a magic formula for taking power in the future elections—the opposition would donate "the labor" and Dr. Werner the "idea," all so that the SDU-ASH-DA trinity could realize its unique vision of Croatia. Unfortunately, in the atmosphere of total moral confusion that prevails in Croatian society, the extreme left has once again seen its chance to use socialist or communist utopia to gain significant political positions by utilizing the paradox of Croatia's internal political tensions, and by hoping for an increase in social tension.

The public has seen through DEHOS even before Dr. Werner planned its emergence from "modest activity," but we have yet to learn what the organization is all about, who are the people abroad that it rallies, and why do they have to hide anything from the Croatian public? Is Dr. Werner perhaps simply an overly ambitious political amateur, as some commentators wish to present him, or is he a foreign political manager of leftist socialist currents within certain Croatian imigri circles, and their foreign tutors, who would offer the Croatian opposition a "grand deal"? The answers to these questions will be provided by DEHOS's concrete political moves. However, what should be absolutely clear is the fact that whoever is offering Croatia a "small, socialist" coalition, is also offering it a neo-Yugoslav synthesis.

FYROM: S. Crvenkovski on Policy of 'Equidistance'

AU0803093496 Skopje MIC in English 4 Mar 96

[Report on interview by former Foreign Minister Stevo Crvenkovski carried in the 2 March edition of Skopje NOVE MAKEDONIJA]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] "I believe the fundamental parameters of the foreign policy of the Republic of Macedonia [The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia—FYROM] are already set and, in my opinion, they will be difficult to change. They can always be changed, but the change would not go without any big difficulties and breaks, since the basic parameters of the foreign policy are derived from a clear strategy about the future of Macedonia.

"When, for instance, we talk about equidistance, we refer to the only path that can sustain Macedonia's independence. It's not a question of some minor political variations, in the sense, now we can apply this principle, and after one year, another one. This is a principle that is a long-term constancy of the Republic of Macedonia, if it truly wants to remain an independent state. It is applied strictly and before all, it is comprehended as readiness to cooperate with everyone, as well as the non-acceptance of any kind of special relations with any neighbor. That is the essence that can develop an interest with all the neighbors, to protect the independence of Macedonia. The European and Euro-Atlantic orientation are predominantly questions of the development of the state to keep up with the basic course of civilization," former Foreign Minister Stevo Crvenkovski says.

In relation to the development of the democratic processes in Macedonia, Crvenkovski says: "I feel that only a small part of everything that is going on is a question of the relationship between two parties. Relations between two parties can certainly develop within a democratic system, in all possible directions. This is not at all a question of processes that are present in a regular development of a democratic system. It would be a great day for democracy if one of the coalition partners assessed that the election coalition is impossible to sustain, to ask for early elections, to have a majority in Parliament to vote for elections, to check political one's position, to gain new legitimacy, and to form a government as one likes with a new Parliament. That would truly be a great day for democracy in Macedonia.

"On the other hand, it would be a minimum for democracy if the mandate is returned and a new one is received. It is normal that the largest party and group of parties receive that mandate again. That is what it says in the Constitution. However, the act of checking itself is essential for democracy. It is boggling why that has not been done."

Crvenkovski feels that the platform of the Alliance for Macedonia has been disrupted because instability has been created in the country: "The platform is certainly disrupted, since political instability has been created. That is evident. From an exceptionally stable position of political subjects, we have now entered a period of risks. A period of risks because despite the large number of votes that the government won—more than a two-third majority, this number of votes is a result of political compromise. Regardless of the type, every political compromise can be changed in any period, to come to a completely different number of votes.

"At the time when the Alliance was being formed, it was generally assessed that Macedonia had still not reached long-term stability, that we are on the best way of achieving it, that much has been done to make that possible, and that it is necessary for the Alliance for Macedonia to provide an additional period of another couple of years to consolidate that process. A period in which there will be no great political risks for Macedonia. The fact that we are entering great political risks today, illustrates that the basic item stressed in the platform of the Alliance does not exist any longer."

FYROM: Exclusion From Renewal Fund Viewed

AU0703170396 Skopje MIC in English 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The statement of the representative of the Italian Foreign Ministry at the news conference in Rome over the "renewal and cooperation in the former Yugoslav countries" that Macedonia [The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia—FYROM] is excluded from the division of this fund, to say the least, has confused the Macedonian public. Moreover, seeing that it comes from a country and from one of its high-ranking officials, following the recent statements that "Italy wants to help other countries, foremost Macedonia and Albania, which have suffered great losses, although being outside the conflicts." Without explanation, our country has been erased from the list of countries that are to receive material satisfaction for the indirect losses suffered from the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. As a reminder, in all the talks in the European Union over the conceptualization of the way in which the former republics from former Yugoslavia should be helped, Macedonia was always included in all the versions. Representatives of the member-states of the European Union have often emphasized Macedonia's role in the implementation of the UN sanctions against FR Yugoslavia, recognizing that it has cost the country a lot. A surprising fact is also that a part of the funds, according to the latest version, will also be used by countries that were directly or indirectly involved in the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Our country was hoping for at least a part of the funds, as the losses it suffered, and especially the economy, are more than evident. Even though Macedonia did not directly take part in the war in the regions of former Yugoslavia, it was quite well affected. First, it lost the markets where most of its goods were sold, a large number of business, technical links were broken off, in view of the inter-dependency of our and the economies of the former YU republics, and the natural and most economic roads for the goods intended for other markets were cut off. The losses that Macedonia suffered, not at its own fault, due to the situation in the region, are estimated at a couple of billion dollars. Those are facts that no one has disputed so far. On the contrary, they were constantly stressed, with an indication that Macedonia and the Macedonian economy are among the biggest losers when it comes to the war in Bosnia. Thus, it comes as an even greater surprise to hear about the decision to exclude our country from the help that the world will give to the former Yugoslav countries in the next couple of years.

In this context, we should remind that this is an initiative of the European Union. According to the latest solution, it should collect some four billion dollars. Namely, according to the so-called "Small Marshall Plan," the European Union, the United States, Japan, and the Arabic countries from the Gulf are to participate with one third each. Although in the beginning a sum of eight billion dollars was discussed, now it has been reduced to four, but still it does not mean that Macedonia should be completely forgotten.

According to announcements, the final figures should be definitely determined in April in Brussels, and then in June in Rome. Macedonia is hoping that it will not be forgotten at all at these meetings, that the mistake will be corrected and it will receive a part, of course, that corresponds with the losses it has suffered. It should be believed that this way, in the true sense of the word, it will not only be satisfaction, but also real help to the economy which has found itself in a truly difficult situation as a result of the war in Bosnia. In this sense, it will be necessary to engage the state administration, especially the Foreign Ministry, in animating all those who supported our country and made efforts for it to enter the list of beneficiaries of international help. At a higher state and government level, as well, our activities for necessary international help have to be intensified, instead of spending enormous energy on our internal political bickering. This is another proof that all the political and other forces should turn towards what we live on. It would be an unforgivable mistake if we are excluded from the help because of our own inactivity. And, as it seems, there is probably a lot of truth that this is a total blunder, since the government officials found out about this decision from the press.

FYROM: New Assembly Chairman Addresses Press

AU0703154696 Skopje MIC in English 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Following his election to the function chairman of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia [The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia—FYROM], Tito Petkovski answered some questions of the press. Asked what he expects, what kind of challenges he will encounter on his new position, he emphasized: "In conditions when the Macedonian Parliament is starting to look like a real Parliament, whether that is good or not—time will show. I will have much more responsibility as Assembly chairman, as various options and political programs will start being articulated here, and therefore I expect to see a very dynamic activity of the Macedonian parliament. Of course, in such a situation of strong political opposition to certain programs, we will all lose a little, but we will gain in the dynamics of the democracy in the Republic of Macedonia."

The new chairman of the Macedonian Assembly Tito Petkovski added: "I am optimistic that we will manage to adopt the electoral laws and the Law on the Election of Representatives to the Assembly, which was criticized by the opposition and some other outside observers who followed the last parliamentary elections. We should adopt those laws in order to have a full regulative in case the citizens eventually decide to call for early elections."

FYROM: Commentary Perceives Apathetic Electorate

AU0803162396 Skopje PULS in Macedonian 8 Mar 96 p 11

[Commentary by Zoran Ivanov: "Barefoot on Velvet"]

[FBIS Translated Text] There is nothing more natural for politicians than the aspiration for power. This is the right time for the constitutional and institutional channels to achieve this goal. The Euro-Balkan cycle of "small revolutions" started with Lech Walesa, and ended with Slobodan Milosevic's congress last week.

The Macedonian [The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia—FYROM] opposition starts from this fact, and normally directs its intentions toward the institutional channels. First of all, it is using propaganda methods to provoke early elections and to animate, motivate, and recruit the voting body. The starter was the Liberal Party, with its shift to the opposition. It had a great advantage in this, considering the character and position of the parliamentary opposition. After they had effectively persuaded themselves that the elections had been forged, which they used as a justification for giving up the second election round in 1994, now the VMRO-DPMNE [Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization-Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity] and the DP [Democratic Party] see a new chance in early elections.

The Republic of Macedonia, now and for a long period in the future, will represent futile soil for "initiatives for changing those in authority." The social factor will be the central speculation and trump card of every opposition. Under such circumstances, every trivial affair will become an affair that the current and any other future authority will have to deal with.

The initiative for early elections is therefore not a surprise, and it could really come true. It could even be fitting for the authority. For a long period of time, it will draw away the attention of the public, which has been burdened with social lethargy and a preponderant general impasse. However, is this sufficient for the government or for the opposition in particular?

If 150,000 signatures are really collected and verified, will the majority of citizens, or at least the minimum of 670,000, accept going out to a referendum and expressing their wish for early elections for a new 120-member parliament? What is the motif that could animate the voting body of millions? What is the new idea that will give it a motif to vote "for"? What are the opposition's new program foundations for this purpose going to be? Honestly speaking, this time there are more reasons for asking "how" than "who." How can there be 300,000-400,000 old and new jobs? How can the salaries be increased be provided for? How can the "trapped" hard-currency savings be freed? What about the nationalized property? What about....

Will the opposition, the one in parliament and the other outside parliament, succeed in promoting itself and gathering around a generally new program idea—a platform—that will offer, or at least sound like offering, a certain amount of reality that can be reached in a short time, considering their mutual—and above all diverging—ideology?

These are just a few questions on which the parties, which are for now just announcing initiatives for early elections, will have to agree among themselves related to the election and program foundations. Even if they get initial support for their intentions with the 150,000 signatures, the citizens will ask for a real confirmation of the new preelection promises. To the contrary, they will be faced with an abstaining and unmotivated voting body, as it was the example with [the recent byelection in] Skopje Constituency 114.

FYROM: TU Expresses Concern for Living Standards

AU0803105196 Skopje NOVA MAKEDONIJA in Macedonian 6 Mar 96 p 3

[Commentary by S. Vukcevic: "Appeal To Halt Fall in Standard of Living"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The same tendencies that characterized the economic and social sphere last year are dominant this year as well. The long-range decrease in the gross national product, which has reached 50 percent in the last six years, the fall in industrial production, which is of the greatest priority in the economic system, has reached 38 percent during the same period and nearly 10 percent in the last year, while public consumption and the cost of living have "crippled" the standard of living of the largest number of citizens in Macedonia [The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia—FYROM] this year. In the past two to three years, the gradual undermining of the economic base has duplicated the number of unemployed and the loss of jobs continually prevails over the number of new job opportunities. The number of people with a "dubious" existence is being unceasingly multiplied to an alarming extent.

Platform of Trade Unions

The situation in the economy is illustrated with the drastic increment of workers facing redundancy. Companies are closing daily and are not even being counted any more. In the first two months of this year alone, 4,000 new workers facing redundancy have been registered. They joined 500 other workers who were proclaimed redundant at the beginning of the year. The state is incapable of "feeding" them because the process of their multiplication is very fast. They receive the modest sum of 100 German marks with a two-month long delay. The established rules are being mutely violated. It has become impossible for the Employment Agency to fulfill its legal commitment and supply people who have lost their jobs with compensation and the new unwritten rule is to provide for compensation from the perpetually impoverished state treasury. The ones without any income at all are in an even worse situation. They are workers who have not received salaries for two or more months (some up to two years). There are over 100,000 such workers now from the total number of 400,000 workers in the country. The number of those who are applying for a job has risen by nearly 50 percent in the last four to five years and we are almost on the top of the European list of unemployment with 28 percent. Pension and health insurance has not been paid for a large number of workers. Since the beginning of this year, we do not see any results from last year's agreement between the trade union and the government for overcoming this problem. As a result of all these trends, there is a rising number of workers who need social aid. It is inadequate and unreliable to mention any figures because new applications of those in need of social aid is increasing every moment. It is alarming because you meet them among the employed as well as among the retired.

However, it seems that only journalists note these events. The parliament has not yet put the social and economic situation on the agenda, while the authorities usually say that this problem is being gradually included in the total reforms. The trade union finally started to discuss these problems at the beginning of the year. In assessing the situation as alarming, it has drawn up several directions for this year's activities aimed at the amelioration of the social and economic situation.

Negotiations

At the top of the list of this year's planned activities of the Confederation of the Trade Unions of Macedonia, there is the appeal to the current authority for bringing measures in the macroeconomic policy that will stop the fall of the gross national product, which is actually the key to everything that is related to the standard of living of the employed. It has been indicated that these measures must provide possibilities for the utilization of the existing capacities and conditions for new investments, together with appropriate social programs. The Collective Agreement is mentioned as an important segment on which the position of the workers must be founded. Since collective agreements have not yet come to life, the trade union insists that they should not be derogated in new legal solutions (as is the trend now), but they should become active, as well as there being control over their implementation. In this regard, there is the following activity: To insist on a salary in accordance with the collective agreement, which means that the lowest salary must be agreed upon first, which is something that failed to be accomplished last year. It will also insist on a law on a minimum salary that will provide for the basic material security of the workers. The trade union does not neglect its duty to supervise the process of privatization within the framework of the agreement that was reached with the government last year. Control over liquidation procedures is demanded, and in relation to this field, which is the most itching segment of life, they have indicated a number of abuses. In the same package, there is also the request for a more efficient system for the protection of workers who have lost their jobs. Nevertheless, the question is how the largest workers' association can come to a solution for problems that have been piling up for years. In spite of the knowledge that matters are of an urgent nature, the situation has not been changed even two months after the adoption of the trade union's platform. The trade union is determined to fulfill everything, including these elementary but hardly attainable rights of its membership, through the legal institutions of the system. Acting as an initiator of everything that has to be done on the social plan, the trade union is holding regular sessions with the leading government figures from whom, objectively speaking, the workers have not had any use so far in promoting the situation facing them. However, the current activities that are aimed at reaching an agreement on the lowest salary—and this question has been "dragged" around for years—are coming to an end, and the expectations are that the government and the trade union will soon come out with a joint proposal. They are right now negotiating on the continuation of the collective agreements, for which three months is set as the deadline. Furthermore, they point out in the trade union that discussions and consultations with the state leadership are either under way or are soon to begin. Nevertheless, in spite of all this, the trade union owes its members a lot more. However, unless it develops a system of agreement with the government and the capitalists, it will not be of any use and the results of its activities will be only partially successful.

Poland: Jordan Confiscates Shipment From Poland to Iraq

LD0703133096 Warsaw Polskie Radio First Program Network in Polish 1300 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Jordanian authorities have reported that a consignment of spare parts for fighter planes being transported from Poland to Iraq has been confiscated. The parts, which were hidden in a consignment of agricultural equipment, were imported by a private firm. The consignment was stopped at a Jordanian airport. The sale to Iraq of parts for fighter planes is a violation of the international embargo imposed on this country.

Poland: Aid Wanted in Return for Being NATO 'Defense Line'

WS0703144496 Warsaw NIE in Polish 7 Mar 96 p 3

[Article by Marek Baranski: "To Not See Paris and Die"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] We have good reason to go back to the issue that the most prominent Polish newspapers and Walendziak's [former Polish Television Board director] people have already bled white. We are referring to a report prepared by the U.S. Congressional Research Service on problems and expectations connected with the military expansion of NATO.

The report generated loud reverberations because its authors presented a pretty obsessive [as published] view on our Glodz-dominated [last name of Polish Army bishop] Army, rebuking it for the lack of civilian control, a fact inadmissible in Europe.

The MON [Ministry of Defense] spokesman and the new defense minister played down these opinions in unison. The post-Solidarity press savored the paragraphs from the U.S. report that reproached our officers for their communist past.

There was one fragment of the Congressional Research Service report—in our opinion, the most important one for Polish security—that was overlooked by everyone. It is about the usefulness of NATO's military expansion from the point of view of West Europe and the United States. These are the fragments that were unanimously ignored by the press and politicians:

NATO anticipates geopolitical advantages, including (...) a defense zone between West Europe and Russia in case relations worsen ("protection against a pessimistic scenario," as U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry put it) (...); [Our] forces and the Central European territory would become NATO's first line of defense should any of the former Soviet republics adopt a less friendly attitude...

So, the report's authors have no illusions that the interest of the West, especially that of the United States, is of prime importance.

We should sincerely admit that, for NATO strategists, the value of our beautiful homeland is first of all the value of a land plot measuring 312,000 square kilometers where, in the event of war with Russia, they could mount defense lines. [passage omitted]

If we finally elbow our way into NATO, our role would be to serve as a defense line.

I am not writing this to spook and discourage everyone from uniting with Europe. After all, it was Russians themselves who, building the Berlin Wall and then accepting German unification, confronted us with a new strategic situation and new political challenges. Let them now not lament over our "perfidiousness." However, the price of Poland as the first roadblock for Russian tanks and the immediate target for Russian rockets should be high.

When Germany tried to enter NATO, the alliance was guided by the "massive retaliation" doctrine. According to that doctrine, if the Warsaw Pact troops crossed the Elbe River and attacked West Germany with all of their force, NATO would respond with all of weapons it had, including nuclear ones. Of course, the Germans had realized that this kind of "initial fight" would turn their country into a smoldering mess. This is why they demanded that the alliance replace the "massive retaliation" doctrine with one of "flexible response." They also secured extremely beneficial economic assistance for themselves.

Polish strategists could venture a similar undertaking. Because we have to be the first line of defense, let us obtain guarantees for modernization of our Army on preferential financial conditions. Let them guarantee us immediate assistance if push comes to shove. And it should no longer be the "leaflet" kind of help, as it was in the past. Also, our country should become a target for substantial financial and technological investments made by the leading companies to make Poland a modern and rich country. If we must die for Paris, Bonn, and Washington, let us at least die with elegance.

All Poles should ensure that our negotiators can rely on Polish public opinion, demanding that Poles have the same guarantees as the Dutch, Danes, Italians, and Greeks. Meanwhile, our military and political establishments view NATO as an attractive Disneyland.

To enter it, "they" order us to buy an expensive ticket, after standing in a very long line.

This is the serious crime committed by politicians from all camps against their own society, which came out thanks to the significant (they say) report.

Poland: Rosati, Danish Counterpart Hold Talks

LD0703143596 Warsaw PAP in Polish 1157 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Warsaw, 7 Mar (PAP)—In Warsaw today, the Polish and Danish foreign ministers, Dariusz Rosati and Niels Helveg Petersen, discussed bilateral relations, opportunities for improving conditions for economic exchange, and the Polish desire to join the European Union and NATO.

Minister Rosati requested that Denmark include Poland in the group of countries with a reduced investment risk. This would mean better credit guarantee conditions for Danish businessmen doing business with Poland. "We have been given certain promises," said Rosati. He reported that Denmark also supports Polish aspirations to become a member of the OECD in 1996.

I have the impression that Denmark fully supports our aspirations to join the EU and NATO and that there has been no change of stand here, said the Polish minister after the talks. Minister Petersen said that Denmark resolutely supports the expansion of the EU; as for the expansion of NATO, he expressed the conviction that in this matter it is necessary to act in accordance with agreed procedures—members of the alliance will start talks in 1997 about who will join NATO and when. Petersen added that the matter of new NATO members must be considered in the broader context of the structure of European security, taking advantage of such structures as the OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe].

Both sides assessed Polish-Danish relations as excellent. It was reported that Minister Rosati would pay an official visit to Denmark next month. Cooperation between Poland and Denmark in the Council of Baltic Sea States and the participation of Polish and Danish soldiers in the IFOR [Implementation Force] units in Bosnia were also discussed. [passage omitted]

Poland: President To Propose Amendments to Tribunal

LD0703205296 Warsaw Polskie Radio First Program Network in Polish 1800 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] After the meeting with judges of the Constitutional Tribunal [TK], President Aleksander Kwasniewski said that he intended to propose amendments to the law on the TK and the small constitution.

The issue mainly concerns the finality of the TK rulings and the speeding up of work on the new constitution.

[Begin Kwasniewski recording] It is quite likely that soon I will propose amendments to the small constitution that will clearly define the position of the TK and the finality of its rulings and will introduce certain practical changes that will, for example, allow the president to sign a law with the exclusion of clauses of this law questioned by the TK.

I think these are modern decisions that we already discussed and approved at the Constitutional Commission many months ago. I would like us to treat these amendments to the small constitution as a testing ground before the full constitution, which will soon be created and which Poland badly needs. [end recording]

Professor Andrzej Zoll, president of the TK, thinks that Poland urgently needs a modern constitution. The president's legislative initiatives can contribute to the speeding up of work on the constitution.

[Begin Zoll recording] I think the state as a whole lacks a lasting foundation on which the legal order can be built and on which fundamental liberties and laws will be built. I think this initiative the president spoke about will speed up work on the introduction of the new constitution. The TK should now be prepared and have a full set of legal measures when the new constitution comes into force. [end recording]

Poland: President Withdraws Walesa Draft Acts From Sejm

LD0703192596 Warsaw PAP in Polish 1623 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Warsaw, 7 Mar (PAP)—According to information obtained by PAP from Antoni Styrczyla, the presidential spokesman, President Aleksandr Kwasniewski withdrew from the Sejm drafts of a number of legal acts introduced by [former President] Lech Walesa.

They are, among other things, the draft law on the authorization of the ratification of the Concordat between the Holy See and the Polish Republic and a draft resolution revoking the 1 July 1994 Act by the Sejm on the procedures of work on the law on the Concordat ratification.

The president also withdrew Lech Walesa's veto in connection with amendments to the law on the takeover of assets that belonged to the former Polish United Workers Party [PZPR]. President Aleksandr Kwasniewski signed these amendments today.

Poland: Bishop on Kwasniewski Withdrawal of Concordat Bill

LD0703200996 Warsaw PAP in Polish 1733 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Warsaw, 7 Mar—Commenting for PAP on Thursday's decision by President Aleksander Kwasniewski to withdraw from the Sejm the draft law on ratification of the Concordat between the Holy See and the Polish Republic and the draft resolution revoking the Sejm resolution of 1 July 1994 on the course of work on the law on ratification of the Concordat, Bishop Tadeusz Pieronek, secretary general of the Polish Episcopate, stated that the most important thing is the president' motive, about which he knows nothing. The bishop also suggested that "perhaps the president will come forward with a new initiative on this matter."

"If the president does this, then apparently he has a motive for behaving like this that I do not know about. I judge that the affairs of the Concordat can run along different tracks, but it is difficult for me to speculate on which they are. I do not believe this could block the matter for the future," Bishop Pieronek said.

Asked whether this fact will not in some way impinge upon the continuation of the dialogue between the church and the state, the secretary general of the Episcopate responded that, at the moment, it is difficult to say anything about this matter. "It is appropriate to wait for a clarification of the motives behind such behavior," he added.

The draft law to authorize ratification of the Concordat between the Holy See and the Polish Republic authorized the president to ratify the Concordat between the Holy See and the Polish Republic drawn up on 28 July 1993. It assumed that, within a period of six months from the date the law comes into effect, the authorities of the Polish Republic would adapt internal laws to the regulations of the Concordat between the Holy See and the Polish Republic. The law was to have come into force on the day of publication. [passage omitted]

Poland: Sejm Legislative Committee Gets New Chairman

LD0703135996 Warsaw Polskie Radio First Program Network in Polish 1300 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Jerzy Jaskiernia was today elected the new chairman of the Sejm Legislative Commission. A total of 15 members of the commission voted in favor of Jaskiernia, who was proposed by the SLD [Democratic Left Alliance], and two voted against. This is a classic comeback, said the commission's deputy chairman, Janusz Szymanski, from the Union of Labor. Before taking up the posts of justice minister and prosecutor general, Jaskiernia was in charge of the work of the Legislative Commission.

Poland: MON Allegedly Chooses JAS-39 Gripen Over F-16

WS0803114996 Warsaw GAZETA WYBORCZA in Polish 8 Mar 96 p 3

[Article by Pawel Wronski: "MON Commission Chooses JAS-39 Gripen"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Ministry of National Defense [MON] commission has chosen a Swedish fighter plane as the future aircraft for the Polish Armed Forces, say unofficial sources. Defense Minister Stanislaw Dobrzanski is leaving for the Czech Republic today to find out which aircraft the Czechs are interested in. We have been informed that the commission, which completed its task at the end of February, concluded that cooperation with the SAAB company in producing the JAS-39 Gripen fighter plane would be best for Polish armaments and the future of the defense industry.

"The report is not unequivocal," says a MON executive. It mainly shows the advantages and disadvantages of the aircraft. It states, for instance, that the Gripen is more modern, whereas the F-16 has been tested in battle. The commission paid no attention to political issues connected with the purchase.

In his talks with Czech Minister Vilam Holan, Minister Dobrzanski will try to find out which aircraft the Czechs prefer. Holan has recently visited the United States to conduct talks on the F-16. Both of our countries will probably choose the same type of fighter plane to save on maintenance costs and to create a common system of air traffic control.

Poland: Officer: Czechs 'Ripped Us Off' in Aircraft Deal

WS0803100396 Warsaw SZTANDAR in Polish 7 Mar 96 p 1

[Article by Wojciech Luczak: "We Made a Bad Deal by Purchasing the MiG-29 Planes; The Czechs Ripped Us Off"]

[FBIS Translated Text] *"Only three of the 10 secondhand MiG-29 planes we received from the Czechs in exchange for 11 brand new Polish Sokol helicopters are serviceable. The rest cannot fly at all," we learned from a high-ranking officer who asked to remain anonymous.*

On 19 February, when the MiG planes were handed over to the air fighter regiment in Minsk Mazowiecki, all reports to the press about it were carefully avoided. The MiG-29 planes were flown from Ceske Budejovice by Polish pilots. It turned out that this was possible only because parts were taken out of serviceable Polish planes and mounted in the Czech planes, which had been grounded since 1994.

"When not used, the Soviet electronic systems deteriorate very quickly. The entire electronic units in the fighter planes brought from the Czech Republic have to be replaced," said our source.

The barter agreement signed with the Czechs is worth $34 million. The price of a single MiG-29 aircraft manufactured in the period 1989-90 was thus fixed at $3.4 million. We learned that the Russians are asking for 40 percent of the price of a new MiG-29 manufactured in the same period—which comes to $6-7 million—for restoring the planes' combat capability. Military decisionmakers rejected this variant. Electronic units and spare parts will be imported from Russia. Domestic aviation plants will carry out an overhaul of the aircraft. The modification of each Czech MiG will cost approximately $2 million. The fighters that were flown in from Ceske Budejovice will be ready to carry out operational flights no earlier than at the end of 1996.

Confidential Czech reports indicate that, if Prague had failed to find a client for its MiG's by the end of the year, they would have been scrapped.

Poland: Kolodko Interviewed on Economic Policies

WS0703125296 Poznan GLOS WIELKOPOLSKI in Polish 28 Feb 96 p 3

[Interview with Grzegorz Kolodko, Polish deputy prime minister and finance minister, by Radoslaw Stankiewicz; place and date not given: "I Will Defend the Honest"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Stankiewicz] In publishing an economic forecast for Poland in the "Package 2000," you have determined the level the Polish economy can reach in the coming years. Reading this document with concentrated attention, one can get an impression that the stifling of inflation, a reduction of taxes, and growth of investments will be difficult to achieve without simultaneously carrying out a reform of the social insurance system or the system of financing the health-care service. In "Package 2000" there is not a single word on this. So is it an economic program, or wishful thinking, irrelevant to the previous assumptions underlying the "Strategy for Poland," as some suggest?

[Kolodko] The "Strategy for Poland" is a program that is bringing the expected results. During the past two years, the Polish economy turned out to be one of the most dynamic in the world. The pace of economic growth was record-breaking, inflation was falling, unemployment was dropping. The real-term incomes of people and consumption were on the rise. Poland's international partners see the results of this program. However, economic growth and progress are not granted to Poland forever. Thus, one needs government actions that will strengthen these trends.

Obviously, it is indispensable to reform the system of social insurance, to continue public-sector privatization and many other detailed programs that are being implemented or prepared by the government. Without them, the strengthening of long-term positive occurrences in the Polish economy will be unrealistic. However, one ought to make certain detailed assumptions specifying the goals, tools, and rules of economic policy in two, in my view, crucial areas: macroeconomic stabilization and functioning of the tax system. Highlighting them in "Package 2000" does not mean putting aside all structural reforms whose implementation is an essential part of "Strategy for Poland" but, rather, stressing its significance and determining the role they play in shaping the condition of the market situation for the Polish economy.

Moreover, "Package 2000" differs largely from all kinds of economic forecasts, where one can find statements of two kinds: the optimistic kind—for instance, GDP growth will reach 7.7 percent in the year 2000—and the pessimistic kind, which provides for 5.4-percent growth. However, they do not provide any concrete methods of action that would allow a realistic forecast of what is going to happen. The "Package" specifies such methods, and they are based on real forecasts. This is simply a program that is precisely placed in time and space and that makes allowances for the current economic situation in Poland.

[Stankiewicz] What interests people most in the proposed solutions are the taxes they will have to pay in 1997 and the following years. You have suggested a return to the 20-, 30-, and 40-percent rate brackets. Will the lowest-income people get less than the richest again?

[Kolodko] When it comes to the income tax of individuals, we propose, as of 1 January 1997, a return without time limit to lower, already known, 20-, 30- and 40-percent brackets. It will surely be associated with a certain correction of the tax-relief and tax-exemption system, as well as a way of adjusting tax rate brackets. Beginning in 1998, the system of adjustment based on the growth of prices and not on the growth of wages, as it has been to date, would take effect. Is lowering of the tax rates fair? One can answer this question in a perfidious manner. If the coalition once raised the rates up to 21.33 and 45 percent, it should lower them in the same way. It would be fair.

[Stankiewicz] The reduction of the tax rates can be both a tool of political games before the parliamentary elections in 1997, which one can quickly desist from, and a purely economic tool, allowing some objectives specified in "Package 2000" to be achieved.

[Kolodko] One of the shortcomings of the Polish tax system is frequent changes. The implementation of the assumptions laid down in "Package 2000" will make taxes predictable for a couple of years. And this is the basic objective of these changes. There is also a purely economic goal.

The reduction [of tax rates] will increase the buying power of Polish households. Each of us will simply have a certain amount of money left, which can be used in two ways. I regard both of them as very favorable to the economy. First, more money with the taxpayers means more shopping—that is, a growth of demand. Greater demand is greater industrial output—that is, better shape of enterprises.

Second, the reduction of tax rates will have a significant influence on the Poles' level of savings. The achievement of inflation rate reduction by a few percent annually, as provided in "Package 2000," will largely depend on this. One can provide that someone paying 21 percent until now, earning about 900 zlotys [Z], and who, as a result of lower taxes, is left an additional Z10, will spend Z9 on bigger consumption and save Z1. After reduction to 40 percent, someone who used to pay 45 percent in taxes and earned Z4,500 will save Z100 monthly and still be able to earmark Z10 for additional consumption and Z90 for savings. In this way, we will produce the envisaged effect of encouraging Poles to save by depositing money at banks, stock exchanges, and bonds, which will naturally stifle inflation.

[Stankiewicz] The feasibility of your plans to reduce taxes has been questioned lately because of an error that the Ministry of Finances [MF] made back in 1995 on exemptions from gifts. The losses suffered from this were so large that the budget could not plan reductions next year. It is also suggested that you step down because of that.

[Kolodko] I reject the charge of having made an error because the intention of the legislative body was to make it possible to exempt "genuine gifts" from taxes. Tax offices, the finance minister, and the government will still support such gifts but will prosecute the dishonest ones. One cannot assume that the taxpayers are dishonest, anyway. I will defend the honest ones. That was the meaning of all of my statements on this issue. If they were presented in a different way, it was only the manipulation of some selected parts of my statements.

There are also no grounds to be apprehensive of the budget losses because the budget will easily cope with tax breaks on gifts, which were taken into account when legal regulations were being prepared on this issue.

When it comes to my eventual stepping down, I will resign when I see inflation rising and output going down; for the time being, it is the other way around. I do not care if my popularity goes down, provided inflation goes down equally fast, if not faster.

[Stankiewicz] Enterprises will also benefit from the solutions embraced in "Package 2000." You suggest reduction of the basic rate of income tax of legal entities by two points a year. Will this reduction be accompanied by curbing the possibilities of using these investment tax breaks?

[Kolodko] A thorough withdrawal from investment tax breaks is out of the question. We are only going to curb their extent with a simultaneous reduction of the basic income tax rate for legal entities by two percentage points a year. I would like it to total 38 percent in 1997 and to stabilize at 32 percent level by the year 2000. One should be aware, however, of the necessity of maintaining a stable level of budget revenues. At the present tax level and the scope of investment tax breaks, the effective rate of paid taxes amounts to no more than 30 percent. It is obvious then that reduction of the nominal rate to 32 percent in the year 2000 cannot entail the reduction of an effective rate to 22 percent without shaking the budget. Changing the scope of accessible investment tax breaks, we will have to square contradictory interests of those taxpayers who, having made use of tax breaks, pay not more than 20 percent [tax rate] (and, who do not want to change anything about it), with the interests of those taxpayers who have not made use of tax breaks and pay 40 percent. I believe the effective rate of the personal income tax will finally stabilize at about 24 percent.

[Stankiewicz] The taxpayers will benefit from the proposals laid down in "Package 2000" if its fundamental assumptions—that is, 4-to-6-percent economic growth in the years to come—prove to be true. There are, however, certain factors that affect the condition of the Polish economy but are independent of it. In line with international forecasts, world economic activity is expected to deteriorate. As a result of the possible collapse of the economy, it may be necessary to reach for the taxpayers' pockets again.

[Kolodko] The whole program is based on several components. It rests on the assumption that we will maintain a few percentage points of economic growth. However, we are not basing our assumptions on only this. They envision a certain independence of the Polish economy from the world market situation. But a worse international situation may be offset by a few elements. It is difficult to forecast now how great an influence the development of the housing industry will have on the market. And this is a fundamental factor on which I base my forecasts. One can expect a greater profit-to-cost ratio of enterprises, more efficient actions of tax enforcement bodies, a curbing of the gray zone, and, at the same time, an increase in the tax base. If all of these elements failed, one would need to seek more money in taxes. I would not like them to be direct taxes, however, but, rather, indirect ones.

Romania: Cernavoda Nuclear Plant To Enter Final Phase

AU0703163996 Bucharest ROMANIA LIBERA in Romanian 1 Mar 96 p 20

[Unattributed report: "Unit One of Cernavoda Nuclear Plant Is Waiting for the Authorization To Move on to the Critical Phase"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Currently, work is in progress at Cernavoda [nuclear power station] to finalize the blueprint to obtain authorization of the National Commission for the Control of Nuclear Activity (CNCAN) to move on to the critical phase [autorizatie de criticitate]. It is being estimated that by the end of March the reactor will become critical, meaning that the controlled reaction of nuclear fusion will be released. The next stage will be to test the performance of all systems involved in the operation of the station and the physical testing of the reactors, which will last until the end of April. Then, the station will be connected to the national power system and the reactor's power will be gradually increased for about four months. Afterward, the reactor will be temporarily stopped and a general inspection of the installation carried out.

If no particular problems crop up, in October or, the latest in November, Unit One will become a commercially exploited unit.

Romania: Daily Sees PD as Referee of Future Coalition

AU0503185296 Bucharest ZIUA in Romanian 27 Feb 96 p 12

[Editorial by Sorin Rosca Stanescu: "Petre Roman Is Setting the Stakes of the Game"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The decisions made by the Socialist Party [PS] to count on Tudor Mohora's [PS president] running for Romania's presidency and by the Socialist Party of Labor [PSM] to stake on Adrian Paunescu's [PS vice president] candidacy will certainly have important consequences for the Romanian political life. If I were to devote this editorial to the presidential elections, I would say that, unlike the other occasions, the battle for Cotroceni [presidential] Palace will be waged this time between mighty politicians. Strong personalities, each one with his own particular appeal to the electorate, good orators, and especially good fighters capable of taking risks, these new candidates are joining the traditional Ion Iliescu-Emil Costantinescu competition for the position of head of state. I might add that, compared to Petre Roman [president of the Democratic Party—PD], Tudor Mohora, Adrian Paunescu, and Corneliu Vadim Tudor [president of the Greater Romania Party, PRM], the candidates of the Social Democracy Party of Romania [PDSR] and CDR [Democratic Convention of Romania] look rather faded. This may partly be due to the erosion of their image, with the passage of time. On the other hand, it is quite possible that Constantinescu and Iliescu still have some aces up their sleeves and will manage to grow in the eyes of the electorate. Regardless of the final score, one thing is certain: Each one of the protagonists will bring additional votes to their own party, to the detriment of other political groupings, which will not manage to put up equally strong personalities in the presidential race.

These clarifications were necessary to allow me to explain the meaning of the rather enigmatic title of this editorial. Until now, there have been three substantial forces which launched themselves in the campaign for the legislative elections: the PDSR, CDR, and PD. The first two, as the public opinion polls and our own daily sampling of the public opinion indicate, are rather even, each one able to count on about 25 percent of the electorate's preferences. The PD is currently being credited with 10-15 percent. However, given the fact that it will put forward a team of young politicians with experience in government and that it has become a member of the Socialist International, the PD has all the chances to increase its share until ballot time. An indisputable asset for the party is the announced candidacy of Petre Roman, a personality which will certainly know how to ensure an additional number of votes for his party. A careful analysis of the Romanian political landscape suggests the existence of a relatively simple balance of forces at this point: A future parliamentary majority, that is a future government, can only take shape around either the PDSR or the CDR. The political observers have been insistently discussing a scenario according to which the two important forces, the PDSR and CDR, will enter into a governing alliance after the elections, thus setting up a new parliamentary majority. There are two unshattering arguments in favor of this thesis: To overcome the international obstacles, the PDSR was unequivocally told that it must renounce any kind of alliance with the parties considered by the free world as extremist or nationalistic. From a strictly mathematical viewpoint, without the PRM, the Romanian National Unity Party [PUNR], and PSM, the PDSR cannot put together a parliamentary majority unless it enters into an alliance with the CDR. Hence, the many speculations in the press to this extent. I take the liberty of suggesting that a second scenario is also possible, whereby the CDR will not ally itself to the PDSR, but each one may try to set up the necessary majority for ruling. In this variant, the PD led by Petre Roman will hold the reins. Or, maybe the reins will be held by the PS, which was shaped by Tudor Mohora as a modern and bright grouping, sufficiently detached from the PSM's image, as it is currently projected by the red rhinoceros of Ilie Verdet [PSM president]. With Petre Roman running for the presidency, the PD might obtain 15 percent and even more of the electorate's votes. In these conditions, the former prime minister's offer might become extremely tempting both for the PDSR and the CDR. Together with the PD, each of these forces would hold some 40 percent of the seats in Parliament. The remaining 11 percent could easily be ensured by bringing into the government some smaller parties that are not anathema to the international community, as the PUNR, PSM, and PRM are. It follows that one should consider bringing in the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania [UDMR], with its automatic 7-8 percent of the vote, and Tudor Mohora's PS, which may obtain a similar electoral result as the UDMR, thanks to Mohora's running for the presidency. The Hungarians will obviously back the grouping which will offer them greater security in preserving certain legitimate ethnic rights. It is premature to speculate whether the PS will react from ideological or practical reasons. For the time being, Mohora—as he alone has given himself this role—is for the PDSR what Petre Roman is for the CDR: the PD is slightly left of the CDR, while Mohora's PS is slightly right of the PDSR. That is why I tend to believe that, immediately after the great final, Mohora will strike an agreement with Adrian Nastase [PDSR executive president] and will not enter into a center-right coalition, not even on a temporary basis. It is clear that, in this variant, the CDR, PD, UDMR, and other opposition parties, which we should not discard out of hand, may put together a parliamentary majority. Another such coalition can be put together around the PDSR. Anyhow, the PD will play the part of the referee.

Slovenia: FM Thaler Presents Platform on EU Integration

AU0803094696 Ljubljana Radio Slovenia Network in Slovene 1430 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] At a news conference, Foreign Minister Zoran Thaler explained the platform and conclusions on Slovenia's integration with the European Union, which was adopted today. Nadja Pengov reports:

[Begin recording] As Foreign Minister Thaler said, the document deals with four groups of questions: our interest in joining the European integration; Slovene-Italian relations in the light of this interest; the Spanish proposal; and joining the European Monetary Union. The document is intended for the domestic and, primarily, foreign public.

The document outlines in great detail our country's achievements in the realm of political and economic reforms. The figures that are supposed to show whether Slovenia meets the criteria for accession to and full membership in the Union are encouraging. Slovenia's goal is full-fledged membership in the European 15 by the year 2001, the condition for which is associate membership. Harmonization of our property legislation with European legislation is the condition for associate status. At the government's recommendation, the parliament is supposed to accelerate the harmonization process.

The chapter on relations with Italy, which is the only EU country that is obstructing this process, is addressed to the audience abroad—that is, to Europe—rather than to Slovenia. The facts, according to Thaler, are the following. Historically, relations between these two countries have not always been easy; however, after World War II the countries regulated relations with bilateral agreements. For that reason we should now look ahead instead of back into history. Slovenia sees its relationship with Italy as one of equal partnership and cooperation. It cannot, however, tolerate Italy's linking our entry into the Union with questions that have been permanently resolved.

Asked whether the government document passed today had been coordinated within the coalition, the foreign minister replied in the affirmative. He said that the document had been supported unanimously, though it took into account the breadth of the debate that had developed lately in Slovenia on the subject. Namely, the document's ambition is to achieve greater consensus on our political scene. [end recording]

Slovenia: Commission To Study Italy's War Crimes Charges

AU0803092296 Ljubljana Radio Slovenia Network in Slovene 1430 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Slovenia is preparing a legal response to the investigation by Roman prosecutor Giuseppe Pititto on massacres in the Carst caves. This involves the investigation of the crimes committed by the Italian Fascists in our country during the World War II. The Slovene authorities plan to set up an experts commission to gather documents on the crimes. [passage omitted]

Slovenia: Helsinki Monitor on Human Rights Violations

AU0803101296 Ljubljana Radio Slovenia Network in Slovene 1430 GMT 7 Mar 96

[Report by Gojko Brvar on a news conference by the Helsinki Monitor, place not given, on 7 March—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Helsinki Monitor has so far received approximately 1,000 appeals for help, and those applying are victims of the violation of the most fundamental human rights. Among them, for example, are families that have been separated as a result of the ban against entry into Slovenia of male family members, mostly former Yugoslav Army officers. The ban is not based on the court rulings on possible criminal actions that had been committed but on the discretionary right of the incumbent officers.

The most numerous category are some 1,200 court charges, affecting some 5,000 people, that annul the housing rights decrees that the Yugoslav Army had issued after 5 June 1991. The courts, which accept the government interpretation that on this date Slovenia assumed management of the real estate previously owned by the Yugoslav Army, refuse to take into consideration the fact that the agreement on this was actually signed in October 1991. The Helsinki Monitor points out that the people affected are Slovene citizens, who have no place to go after eviction. The organization concludes that the government has nevertheless demonstrated some good will by withholding the execution of the already effective eviction orders. The uncertainty has, thus, been prolonged for the people in these apartments, while on the other hand, the Defense Ministry holds some 1,000 apartments that have been standing empty for the fifth year.

Stateless persons, suspended pensions, suspended health care, suspended disability benefits, the abnormal number of court cases against citizens—this is the ugly picture about Slovenia painted by the Helsinki Monitor report. On top of everything else, the state advises those people it had erased from the register of permanent residents to apply for that status in another state under a fictitious address. In short, it incites them to criminal action instead of resolving their problem.

Slovenia: Prosecutors' Group To Combat Organized Crime

AU0603163196 Ljubljana Radio Slovenia Network in Slovene 1430 GMT 6 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Attorney General Anton Drobnic formed a special group of prosecutors who will hunt down organized crime. Gregor Krajc interviewed Barbara Brezigar, head of the group and acting chief of the Ljubljana prosecutor's office:

[Begin recording] [Brezigar] The special group will deal with the worst forms of organized and economic crime, that is, the crime that is taking place throughout the territory of our country and also has links abroad, for example, money laundering and similar criminal actions, as well as actions involving senior political structures. These, in short, are the cases that this group is supposed to investigate.

[Krajc] If the special group of prosecutors is to do its work effectively, it will need good information. From which sources will they obtain information?

[Brezigar] We will get information from the services that normally uncover criminal acts. Upon concluding that a matter requires our involvement in the phase prior to filing charges, we will cooperate actively with the police and other detection services at this stage of the procedure. A prosecutor has this possibility. According to the Law on Criminal Procedure, the prosecutor directs the preliminary procedure [predkazenski postopek], which is the stage at which the matter is still being investigated by the police. Once the suspicion is confirmed, we will pursue the matter further, file a request for investigation, an indictment, and in any possible ensuing court case also represent the prosecution.

[Krajc] Some have already likened the special group of prosecutors with the Clean Hand of the Italian Prosecutor Di Pietro; however, the comparison is not entirely correct because the authorities of the Slovene group are narrower.

The authorities in the procedure are defined by the Law on Criminal Procedure. The prosecutor directs the preliminary procedure and if the cooperation with police is good and correct then success cannot be far behind. The members of the group of prosecutors will be appointed shortly. Bearing in mind the current situation, we can expect the first results by the end of the year. [end recording]

Slovenia: Ljubljana Terror Campaign Threatened

LD0703182896 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1624 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Ljubljana, March 7 (TANJUG)—An unknown organization called the 'Resistance Committee' has warned Ljubljana mayor that it would launch terrorist actions in Slovenia after March 15 regardless of possible casualties.

The 'Resistance Committee' demands that Ljubljana mayor Dimitri Rupel check a campaign launched at the initiative of rightist forces and home-guard lobby against the tradition of the socialist revolution and the national liberation struggle during World War Two.

Terrorist actions will be carried out if Slovenian authorities destroy or bury the monuments of the national liberation struggle as announced, the organization said in a letter to the Ljubljana mayor.

Slovenia: Purchase of Israeli Defense Equipment Approved

AU0703165996 Ljubljana Radio Slovenia Network in Slovene 1430 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Slovene Government at today's session passed appendices and changes to the Penal Code that the State Chamber is expected to pass in summary procedures. With these changes, the government is aspiring to ensure the more expeditious prosecution of all types of crime, especially organized and economic crime, ensure more effective prosecution of criminals, and more productive work for prosecutors. The changes also involve measures for more effective prevention of money laundering.

A government investigating commission concluded that the purchase of the communication system for the requirements of the Defense Ministry was in accordance with Slovene legislation. The system of the Israeli manufacturer is more favorable in terms of price and technology. The commission also concluded this on the basis of a comparison with a U.S. manufacturer, who filed a complaint with the expert technical team of Defense Ministry representatives. [passage omitted]

Federal

FRY: Government Adopts Platform on Talks With Croatia

LD0703173496 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1704 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, March 7 (TANJUG)—The Yugoslav Government on Thursday [7 March] adopted a platform for Yugoslav Foreign Minister Milan Milutinovic's talks with Croatian Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Mate Granic.

A federal government statement said the meeting would take place in Zagreb in late March within the dialogue on a normalization of Yugoslav-Croatian relations.

The Yugoslav Government also formed a team of experts for talks with Croatia on resolving outstanding issues in the areas of road, railway, and air traffic, telecommunications and power.

Yugoslav and Croatian representatives last met at the level of foreign ministers in Belgrade in mid-January this year.

FRY: Serbs To Block Croatia-FRY Border During Protests

LD0703201896 Zagreb HTV Television in Serbo-Croatian 1830 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Opposition parties that are boycotting the (Serbian) parliament have called on all dissatisfied citizens of Serbia to attend demonstrations in Belgrade this Saturday [9 March]. It will be the fifth anniversary since more than 100,000 people took to the streets of Belgrade and against whom Milosevic used the army and police.

The Serbian Renewal Movement, Civic Alliance and the Democratic Party of Serbia have been distributing leaflets and are expecting Serb refugees from Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia to come in largest numbers. A large group of the Serbs from eastern Slavonia, Baranja, and Western Srijem have announced their attendance at the demonstrations in Belgrade against Milosevic's regime. Therefore, Serbia has taken measures—it is to close the border between Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to all civilian traffic. Between 8 and 11 March the Serbian army and police will close all roads and bridges across the Danube with caltrops and roadblocks.

We have learned from UNTAES (United Nations Transitional Administration in Eastern Slavonia) that the border will remain blocked even after Monday by which Belgrade will attempt to prevent the Serbs from eastern Slavonia, Baranja, and western Srijem from moving to Vojvodina and Serbia.

Military and civilian authorities in the temporarily occupied territory of Croatia have held a meeting in Beli Manastir to examine whether the Serbs who are in doubt should stay in Croatia as equal citizens or move to the so-called Yugoslavia. The conclusion is—an exodus ought to be prevented. The authorities in Belgrade are not interested in the Serbs moving out of the Croatian Podunavlje because they can easily spark a social explosion in Serbia. Belgrade is already beset with enough difficulties regarding the accommodation of refugees. Therefore Serbia, under the pretext of preserving law and order, is blocking roads and bridges to stop those who have been trying to move to Belgrade for months.

FRY: Leftists Invite Belgraders To Boycott 9 Mar Rally

LD0703222996 Belgrade TANJUG in English 2203 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, March 7 (TANJUG)—A Yugoslav leftist party invited the Yugoslavs, specifically Belgraders, to boycott a rally called by three Serbian opposition parties for March 9.

The opposition league of communists - movement for Yugoslavia said in a statement that this rally was planned to commemorate the rally of March, 9, 1991 when rioters took over Belgrade and 'a retrograde and violent idelogical concept took its victims.'

The party said that some opposition party leaders had joined a campaign against their own country orchestrated from world centres of power and were 'taking parliament into the street, turning democracy into anarchy and substituting political struggle for violence.'

Serbian opposition held a rally in downtown Belgrade on March 9, 1991, in defiance of a government ban, which degenerated into a riot in which two people were killed and several were injured.

FRY: Lilic Addresses Belarus Academicians on Balkan Peace

AU0803085396 Belgrade RTB Television Network in Serbo-Croatian 1830 GMT 7 Mar 96

[Report by Milorad Komrakov in Minsk—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Komrakov] The Yugoslav strategy has three goals: peace, stability, and development in the Balkans and in the southeast of Europe; modern scientific-technological, economic, and democratic development; and the constant strengthening of the Balkan, European, and international position in order to have peace, Yugoslav President Zoran Lilic said in the Belarus Academy of Sciences in Minsk this evening.

The Yugoslav peace policy is completely clean, honest, and clear, the Yugoslav president told the Belarus academicians. The question is the way in which the international community reacted to Yugoslavia's peace policy. Their reply is neither honest nor sufficiently clear: sanctions, unprecedented in the world, that dramatically hit the ruling forces and the opposition, working people and pensioners, the healthy and the ill, adults and children, workers and farmers—in a word, bare sustenance—as well as hitting culture and top science.

[Lilic] Our two countries and their peoples have not only been allies for centuries; they are, I may freely say, brothers as well. These are rare examples in history of people bearing such sacrifices for truth and justice, for freedom and dignity, as our two peoples have done. We have constantly repeated to ourselves a single question: Is striving for justice to be rewarded with sanctions the consequences of which are damages amounting to $150 billion? We were not the only ones damaged; all our closer and more distant neighbors also suffered great punishment. This is not in the interest... [pauses] We are certain that the sanctions against the FRY cannot be in the interest of Europe or of its democratic development.

A peace agreement was reached in Dayton, in the United States, and this agreement was reached above all thanks to the FRY peace policy. The war has ended on the territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina, peace is possible, and we in the FRY want it to be lasting and stable, but also just. That peace is possible only if equal rights and the just interests of all the peoples in Bosnia and on the territory of the earlier Yugoslavia are respected.

I am convinced that peace is above all a compromise of interests. This logically means that the interests of the Serbian people in Bosnia, as well as in Croatia, have to be respected, just as the interests of other peoples have to be. The Serbian people do not seek privileges. The Serbian people are satisfied with being equal. We are certain that such an understanding is the very key for a lasting and stable peace.

The FRY, and our delegation in Dayton headed by Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, made an exceptional contribution to the Dayton agreement. I would like to explain to you that this was not because the Dayton agreement was an ideal solution. Within it there were many (?difficult) solutions for the Serbian people, as well as for other peoples in Bosnia-Herzegovina. We extended our support to the Dayton agreement above all because this was a realistic compromise that halted war and devastation, because it was a turning point between war and peace, and above all because people stopped dying.

We have always believed that peace is only possible on the basis of respect for equal interests of all the peoples in Bosnia: Serbs, Muslims, and Croats. Now, in the wake of Dayton and Paris peace agreements, we believe that life in peace and the implementation of the agreement is possible with an equal treatment of all sides, all peoples living there.

[Komrakov] We believe that peace is possible, and we have been striving for the implementation of the Dayton letter and spirit. There are dangers there, Lilic said. They above all lie in preferring the Muslim and Croatian sides over the Serbian side. Certain world circles are declaring their support for peace in Bosnia, but at the same time giving weapons to Muslims and Croats.

[Lilic] It is less important whether that is in violation of the UN Security Council decision, but it is extremely important to ask whether peace and an end to the civil war can be achieved by arming one side against the other. Bosnia does not need any more arms, any more mujahidin, or any military alliance of the superpowers. Bosnia and Europe need peace, stability, and development.

[Komrakov] In his speech to the academicians this evening, the Yugoslav president reiterated that the Belarus people and President Lukashenka were brave and resolute in not implementing sanctions against Yugoslavia, and that is what the Yugoslav people will never forget.

The Yugoslav president said that he expects direct cooperation between the Serbian Academy of Sciences and the Belarus Academy of Sciences. We believe in endless energy and in the inspiration of the centuries-long spiritual unity between our peoples. I believe that your Academy of Sciences will also contribute to this inspiration and to the goals of our brotherly peoples, President Lilic concluded, amid the tempestuous applause of the Belarus academicians. [passage omitted]

FRY: Government Backs Balkan Ministers' Peace Conference

LD0803115996 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1101 GMT 8 Mar 96

["Pool" item]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sofia, March 8 (TANJUG)—The Yugoslav Government backs Bulgarian Prime Minister Jan Videnov's proposal that a conference of the Balkan foreign ministers be held in Sofia in June, Yugoslav Vice-Premier and Trade Minister Jovan Zebic told TANJUG in Sofia on Friday [8 March].

Zebic said, 'Prime Minister (Jan) Videnov, with whom I met in Sofia two days ago, stressed the importance of a Balkan conference on peace and stability in the region following the conflict in the former Yugoslavia.'

Zebic is returning to Belgrade on Friday following a successful meeting of an inter-government commission in Sofia.

The Bulgarian Government called on the foreign ministers of all Balkan states to review ways of economic cooperation and agree on broadening goodneighbourly relations at a conference to this end in June.

FRY: Article Expresses Pessimism About Long-Term Peace

96BA0164A Belgrade EKONOMSKA POLITIKA in Serbo-Croatian 22 Jan 96 pp 6-7

[Unattributed article: "In Stages"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The great majority of politicians and military men in our country and in the world are expressing satisfaction and initial successes in carrying out, not to say implementation, of the Dayton accord and the Paris peace agreement. The forces of the IFOR [Implementation Force] are being deployed in Bosnia-Herzegovina, some of the most dangerous hotbeds of conflict are gradually calming down, and the agreed-upon deadlines for the performance of certain specific measures are basically being respected. There are, then, quite a few reasons for optimism.

To be precise, in saying optimism we are referring to the short-term prospects, to a time frame of a year or somewhat longer. When it comes to long-term prospects, to permanent peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina, we are less optimistic and more skeptical, even to some extent pessimistic. The reason for the lack of optimism lies in the hints, sometimes even explicit statements, from all sides that the present situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina is considered temporary, that it is only one stage on the long road of realizing historical national interests which in past centuries, including the last four years of warfare, could not be realized, but have not been given up.

The present situation is considered temporary, the result of several factors, from the relative balance of military power achieved, economic exhaustion, fatigue of the human material, and so on, to, and this is decisive, the dictates of the international community, which has had enough of the war and everything that accompanied it, and has imposed its peace on all the parties to the conflict. Thus none of them have been able to achieve everything they had in mind.

Which objectives of the three sides in Bosnia-Herzegovina have been achieved, and which have not, cannot be found anywhere in a detailed enumeration, but conclusions can be drawn from words and deeds.

The Serbian side, to begin with, which has come to the conclusion that world developments, above all in Europe, are such as to make it increasingly difficult to alter by force established international, and indeed even internal, borders, and that the last moment has come to undertake something to anticipate the expected opposition of the international community to such attempts, if necessary even by force of arms, has managed in this stage to jump over the Drina and create a Serbian state on its left bank. To be sure, that state is not altogether independent, rather it stands in some loose connection to the creation of the other two nationalities in Bosnia-Herzegovina, but this is still a base from which further progress can be made.

The next stage, or next stages, should be to sever that loose connection, establish a unified state with Serbia and through it Yugoslavia, and then further territorial expansion westward, northward, and southward, including an outlet to the sea. The correlate of that is ethnic cleansing, above all of Muslims, but also of other smaller ethnic groups.

The Croatian side has finally obtained its state after "a thousand years," at present not within the borders of the earlier socialist republic, but with good prospects of achieving that in a year. It has become a respectable military force. It has managed to protect its "soft underbelly," to achieve ethnic homogeneity by the departure, one way or another, of the numerous Serbs, and of others to a lesser extent.

In the stages which follow, one should expect efforts to include new territories in Croatia, above all in Bosnia-Herzegovina, primarily those inhabited by Muslims, with or without ethnic cleansing. Eastward and southward expansion cannot be precluded either, if Serbia and Yugoslavia continue to weaken, and if the international constellation is favorable, but a combined action with them in a new division of Bosnia is also possible.

The Muslim side sees itself as the greatest loser in the war conflict initiated in 1992, and the greatest victim of ethnic cleansing, and it is right about that, but it also sees itself as a potential subject of a Serbian-Croatian bargain concerning the territorial division of Bosnia. Nevertheless, it has managed to survive and to preserve Bosnia-Herzegovina at least on paper. In the coming stages, it will try to dodge the dangers by weaving a path between its dangerous neighbors, by strengthening its reliance on certain world powers and on the Islamic world, by strengthening its own economic and military potential, etc. In all of this, that side is not without territorial ambitions either, whether it is a case of expanding their authority to all of Bosnia-Herzegovina or even expansion southward and eastward (Sandzak).

These prospects are disturbing, to say the least. We do not see how movements in the directions we have described can be prevented. The present picture of the world and balance of power in it certainly constitute the best check. But even they are not eternal. The volcano of Bosnia-Herzegovina is continuing to boil, and the lid on it could fly off. How, in that situation, is one to be a perpetual optimist, especially as long as these or similar forces are in power everywhere?

FRY: Milosevic Meets With Russian Oil Company Directors

LD0703182396 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1708 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Belgrade, 7 Mar (TANJUG)—Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic today received a delegation of eminent businessmen, including directors of large Russian oil companies—Neftegaz from Surgut, Nafta-Mosva, and Kinef—and their Belgrade hosts, representatives of the Intereksport Company.

The strengthening of economic ties and cooperation is in progress, in which an important place belongs to joint ventures between these companies and our country.

Particular attention was paid to the joint participation of Yugoslav and Russian partners in projects and investments in the domain of exploitation, refining, and marketing of oil and oil derivatives, scientific research and civil engineering for the needs of industrial production, and also in the domain of trade.

FRY: Firms Ready To Return to International Market

LD0703195996 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1833 GMT 7 Mar 96

["Ecopool" item]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, March 7 (TANJUG)—President of the Yugoslav Chamber of Commerce Mihailo Milojevic said Thursday [7 March] at a plenary meeting with visiting Austrian businessmen that there were great prospects for promoting economic relations between the two countries.

The trade exchange between the former Yugoslavia and Austria totalled one billion and 669 million dollars in 1990. Serbia and Montenegro accounted for 40 percent of the 1990 trade exchange.

Speaking about the present situation in Yugoslav economy, Milojevic said that the main drawbacks were a lack of working capital and insufficient use of capacities. He said that a process of privatization had been launched in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and invited Austrian firms to take part in it.

Milojevic said that Yugoslav legislation, particularly laws regulating foreign invesments, were in harmony with European norms.

The head of the Austrian business delegation and director of the Vienna-based Organization for International Economic Relations, Wilchelm Hendricks underscored the need to renew economic relations with Yugoslavia and said that 70 percent of Austrian foreign investments were placed on markets in Eastern and Southern Europe.

FRY: Poll Shows Business Optimism Waning

96BA0164D Belgrade EKONOMSKA POLITIKA in Serbo-Croatian 15 Jan 96 p 19

[Article by B.T.: "Optimism of Business People Has Dropped Off"]

[FBIS Translated Text] According to figures published by the Market Research Institute [IZIT], based on a survey of a permanent sampling of business people, results are less favorable now than they were just a month ago.

Judging by the news media, we are making more and more progress every day, in every way. Countless firms are concluding very favorable contracts with trading partners from abroad in amounts that run into millions of dollars. But judging by the survey done by IZIT in its December issue, 16 percent expect a good business climate over the next three months, while previously this figure was 31 percent, and 21 percent expect it to be worse, while previously this figure was 15 percent. What happened in just a month, and why did the optimism of business people fall off? The greatest drop in optimism was recorded for producers of machines and equipment; no less than 42 percent of them see no possibility for an improved business climate, while it does seem somewhat more favorable to the other two special groups. Only 19 percent expect a good business climate in the production of consumer goods, and a poorer climate is expected by 20 percent of those surveyed, while in the production of raw materials and supplies 14 percent expect a poorer climate and 20 percent a good one.

We see almost the identical situation among the business people on the question of domestic demand and the demand for exports. A growth in the influx of domestic orders is expected over the next three months by 22 percent of the respondents (25 percent in the previous survey), while 17 percent expect a drop, so that the net result of the responses has dropped from + 9 in the previous survey to + 5 in the most recent one. But when the business people were asked what they expect demand to be over the next six months, the responses showed a bit more optimism; 54 percent expect growth, and 14 percent of the producers surveyed expect a drop.

The fact that the first several months after suspension of the UN sanctions will be very difficult is confirmed by the forecasts of business people concerning the influx of export orders. A growth in the demand for exports is expected by 34 percent (40 percent earlier), and the net result of the responses worsened from 29 to 0. In the consumer goods grouping, 72 percent of the business people expect more export orders, while in the group of machine and equipment producers and raw materials and supply producers, 49 percent expect a drop in the demand for exports.

The result of the IZIT Test of Market Conditions concerning the reentry of Yugoslav enterprises on the world market shows that activities to renew old business ties with foreign partners have been undertaken by about 93 percent of industry and about 91 percent of construction. In industry, 23 percent are working at an accelerated pace to renew old business ties, 12 percent are working at a slower pace, and 7 percent are making no attempts at all. An accelerated effort to find new foreign trading partners is under way at 35 percent of the industrial respondents, and 37 percent are doing so at a "normal" pace.

Serbia

Serbia: Authorities Arrest War Crimes Suspect

LD0703172596 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1621 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Belgrade, 7 Mar (TANJUG)—On 2 March, members of the state security of Serbia's Ministry of Internal Affairs arrested Drazen Erdemovic, born on 25 November 1971 in Donja Dragunja near Tuzla, under suspicion of committing the criminal act of war crimes against civilians, contrary to Article 142, Section 1 of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Penal Code, the Serbian public prosecutor's office announced today.

Erdemovic was handed over to the investigative judge of the Novi Sad District Court who ordered an investigation and detention.

Drazen Erdemovic is suspected of taking part in the mass murder of civilians near Srebrenica in July 1995. In the presence of his solicitor and the investigative judge the accused admitted to the charges.

After the investigation, charges will be brought against Erdemovic in accordance with the law.

In the same operation, members of the state security also arrested Radoslav Kremenovic, born on 16 October 1967 in Bistrica in Banja Luka municipality, for hiding the accused Erdemovic. Investigation and detention were also ordered in the case of Kremenovic.

The International War Crimes Tribunal in the Hague was informed about the preliminary results of the investigation, it is said in the statement.

Serbia: Opposition Calls For Support for 9 Mar Rally

AU0703204696 Paris AFP in English 2031 GMT 7 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, March 7 (AFP)—Three Serbian opposition parties called Thursday [7 March] on Serbians to take to the streets in a weekend demonstration against President Slobodan Milosevic.

The Serbian Renewal Movement, Democratic Party and the Civic Alliance have called the demonstration for Saturday to mark the fifth anniversary of an anti-Milosevic protest in 1991 in which four people were killed.

The parties called on their supporters not to let themselves be intimidated by the authorities, who have banned protests in the centre of Belgrade.

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